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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

LAMPROTES, SFALLEIN, ASFALEIA AND HUBRIS IN THUCYDIDES

BY

CAROLINE FALKNER

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Studies in Thucydides' Historiography" submitted by Caroline Falkner in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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Date: August 30, 1988

ABSTRACT

Critics of the *History* have long recognised that Thucydides is not as detached and objective an author as he might at first seem. Although he seldom makes direct, personal statements in the work, his interpretation of events may be inferred from his use of more subtle techniques such as highlighting, juxtaposition and foreshadowing.

A survey of Thucydides' use of the words *lamprotes*, *sfallein*, *asfaleia* and *hubris* show that repetition and recall also suggest and underline for the reader the author's interpretation of events. *Lamprotes* and *hubris* are connected most closely with Athens and Thucydides' dramatic treatment of the reversal of Athenian fortunes in the Peloponnesian War. *Sfallein* and *asfaleia* are used of both sides in the conflict, and reveal their beliefs about the possibility of failure and the precautions to be taken against it.

The repetition of these words also indicates something about Thucydides' views on historical process. He suggests that there is for humanity a cycle of glory and achievement followed by a failure or fall, the effects of which may be mitigated but not avoided by careful forethought that takes into account the operation of chance.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

At first sight Thucydides appears objective and detached in his account of the Peloponnesian War. Critics have, however, demonstrated that such objectivity is in appearance only. For example, Connor has commented on 'the intense emotional power of a work ostensibly so detached'.[1] Many others have identified the techniques by which Thucydides achieves his effects and what they reveal about his interpretation of events.

As early as 1907 Cornford suggested that Thucydides saw Athens as a tragic heroine, and detected parallels in Thucydides' work to the tragedies of Aeschylus.[2] J. de Romilly later concluded that the *History* was a study of Athenian imperialism.[3] Still more recently Hunter considered Thucydides' use of foreshadowing to prepare the reader for the outcome of events as Thucydides relates them.[4] In addition, there has been a great deal of scholarly discussion on the question of the composition of the work, a question that is related to the problem of its interpretation and the search for Thucydides' own final judgement in the *History*.

Such different interpretations of the work show the difficulty in determining what Thucydides' own explanation and judgement of events was. In general it seems that his method of composition relies more on implication than on direct statement and such devices as foreshadowing, highlighting and juxtaposition appear to be used to this end.

A further method, that of repetition and recall, may also be an important part of Thucydides' literary technique. Certain words recur

again and again throughout the text of the *History*; among these words are λαμπρότης, σφάλλειν/εσθαι, ἀσφάλεια and ὕβρις, which will be considered in subsequent chapters. A study of such terms may show whether their repetition is a deliberate effect by Thucydides, one meant to suggest and underline for the reader particular concepts that then echo and re-echo throughout the text. Reminiscence and repetition of these terms may also help to reveal what Thucydides' own value judgements may have been and how his interpretation of events may have been shaped by them. Finally, a study of such repeated words may indicate whether they are linked so as to indicate Thucydides' ideas about the process of history.

CHAPTER TWO

ΛΑΜΠΡΟΤΗΣ

The adjective λαμπρός is found in Greek literature from Homeric epic onwards and means 'brilliant' or 'clear' in a visual sense, e.g. in *Iliad* 1.605, where it is used of the sun. It was later used metaphorically of something clear or definite, e.g. in Aeschylus *Eum.* 797, where it refers to evidence. Each of these meanings is found in the *History*, e.g. vii.44.2, of the moon during the night battle at Epipolae, and vii.55.1 of the victory of the Syracusans. The noun λαμπρότης, the verb λαμπρύνεσθαι and the superlative form of the adjective are all used by Thucydides, but to judge from their use by previous authors, e.g. Herodotus i.41, vii.154, Pindar *Nem.* VIII.34, they should contain something more than a reference to mere brightness or clarity. There may also be the suggestion that the splendour of λαμπρότης itself will not last, since such glory and its end are closely linked in these examples.[1]

Compounds of λαμπρός are found only in speeches or personal summaries by Thucydides. The speeches in the *History* are used by the author to present important arguments and to highlight particular situations. The same is true of the personal summaries. Thus, words that recur in summaries and speeches must have some significance and may be meant to suggest certain ideas to the reader. In addition, neither λαμπρότης nor λαμπρύνεσθαι is found earlier than the mid-fifth century,[2] while ἐλλαμπρύνεσθαι is not attested before Thucydides.[3] Thucydides, then, is either using a recently coined word or, perhaps, experimenting with a new form to create a specific effect.

The first use of a λαμπρός word in Thucydides is in the

superlative form of the adjective λαμπροτάτους [i.138.6]. It occurs at the end of the digression on the careers of the Spartan commander, Pausanias, and the Athenian leader, Themistocles [i.127-38]. Clearly, Thucydides is recalling the visual element in the word and means that the two stood out in ability and achievments far more than anyone else. Opinions have, however, differed about the relevance of this digression, which is placed between an account of the Congress at Sparta before war is declared and the delivery of the Spartan ultimatum to Athens. Gomme has called it "quite unnecessary" and regarded it as an example of Thucydides' interest in biography that he has "checked elsewhere".[4] Connor suggested that it "sustains new attention to individual leaders and adds new depth and complexity."[5] The introduction of the importance of the individual to history is certainly significant, as Connor says, and Thucydides continues to point out the contribution made by individuals such as Pericles, Cleon, Alcibiades and others throughout the *History*.

There is, also, another connotation which Thucydides may be introducing into the *History*. In the long excursus on the respective leaders Thucydides has not glossed over the fact that both their careers ended ignominiously. Both were accused of collaboration with Persia, Pausanias was starved to death and Themistocles exiled in disgrace. From the immediate context it seems that Thucydides' use of λαμπροτάτους in such fateful circumstances, just after the description of their fall, may not be accidental. It makes clear the point that the brilliance of the individuals concerned is no guarantee of lasting success for them. Such splendour, suggested in λαμπροτάτους, does not last and has no practical future value.

The noun λαμπρότης occurs in the second speech of Pericles [ii.64.5]. Here it is used to describe the glory of Athens. Thus, λαμπρότης can be a property of the state as well as the individual. The visual element of the word is again present[6] when Pericles describes the power and position of Athens and says that the hatred others have for her will not last but her present splendour will be remembered for ever. In this speech Pericles tries to encourage the Athenians to remain consistent to his policies and not react over-emotionally to the unexpected tragedy of the plague. They should feel confident in their superiority (καταφρόνησις ii.62.4 - the word used by the Corinthians to Sparta at i.122.4, when warning them that a feeling of superiority has frequently brought disaster to others). Λαμπρότης is also qualified in this passage by παραυτίκα. The reference is to Athens' splendour at the moment, but it might also be taken as suggesting the short time such splendour lasts, as παραυτίκα also means 'for the moment'. There is a link also between παραυτίκα ... λαμπρότης and ἐς τὸ ἔπειτα δόξα. From its meaning of brightness, λαμπρότης is, perhaps, seen as a flash of glory at its moment of achievment -- a reality only for a short time, although the memory of it in the minds of others, (its δόξα), will last in the same way as the Homeric hero expects his κλέος to last.

The remark occurs, also significantly for Thucydides' view of events, shortly after a description of Athens as the greatest power up until that time [ii.64.3]. Words emphasizing her greatness are repeated in the chapter but, together with them, comes the reminder [ii.64.3] that 'everything is born to decay'. The idea of impermanence is, perhaps, being reinforced and, through Pericles, Thucydides may be saying that Athens has reached her point of λαμπρότης and that she will

go no further. It is not, however, necessarily her own fault that she will decline. The start of this decline, which becomes a moral one, is attributed to chance[7] - the occurrence of the plague.

In the next chapter [ii.65.5] the same idea, that Athens achieved her greatest glory under Pericles and will subsequently decline, is stated in Thucydides' summary of the war. He clearly says that Athens was at her greatest, μεγίστη, the word that Pericles himself used frequently in his speech [ii.64.3,4,5]. Her fall was the result of the selfish and ambitious policies of Pericles' successors.[8] The description of Pericles and his policies in chapter 65 contrasts with the sweeping statements made about his successors and leaves the reader with an impression of the swiftness of the decline of Athens, once Pericles was removed. Once again, λαμπρότης occurs in a context which suggests the short-lived nature of splendour, and the speed with which decline follows. Here, the splendour is clearly associated with Athens.

The end of the siege of Plataea and its surrender are highlighted by a speech [iii.53-9]. The Plataeans appeal to Sparta not to hand them over to Thebes, an act which will mean their destruction. They recall [iii.59.2] the splendour of their past actions in the Persian War and refer to them as λαμπρότατα in contrast with their present dire situation - τὰ δεινότατα. Once again, Thucydides may be linking ephemeral splendour gained from past achievments with a fall, because the Spartans ignore the appeal and allow Thebes to destroy Plataea.

Plataea was of little military significance at this point in the war, so that Thucydides' description is out of all proportion to her value to Athens.[9] His treatment of the destruction of Plataea is meant to demonstrate Spartan pragmatism through her disregard for the

achievments of the past. The incident makes a statement not simply about Sparta but about Athenian motives and character, too. Plataea was an old and faithful ally whom Athens had chosen to forget. Also, by introducing λαμπρότης just before the account of the end of Plataea, Thucydides may be implying that, despite the glory, a fall is imminent.

At the conference at Gela the Sicilan cities discuss a general peace settlement among themselves in the face of the threat of Athenian intervention against them [iv.58-65]. Hermocrates of Syracuse describes the advantage to Sicily of acting for the common good rather than for individual interests. He adds that the splendours (λαμπρότητας) of peace are no less than those of war [iv.62.2]. If there is an implication of ephemerality in λαμπρότης, then peace in Sicily will be short-lived. The word λαμπρότης is also associated here for the first time with Sicily. Thucydides is foreshadowing the Athenian expedition against Sicily and its result for Athenian λαμπρότης. He has stated [ii.65.4] that the Sicilian venture was a mistake for Athens. Athens, at present, enjoys λαμπρότης, although her decline has already begun. Peace can give opportunities for λαμπρότης but against the background of probable Sicilian disunity [iv.59.4] these, too, Thucydides may be suggesting, will not last. The coming contest will result in the loss of Athens' splendour and its acquisition by Syracuse [vii.87.5].

It is in the sixth and seventh books of the *History* that Thucydides makes the most frequent use of λαμπρότης. It is also in these books that he describes in detail the greatness of the Sicilian expedition, its failure and its destruction.

In the debate at Athens over the launching of the expedition, Nicias uses ἐλλαμπρύνεσθαι to comment on the selfish behaviour of Alcibiades who, in his opinion, would risk the state for his own

individual splendour [vi.12.2]. Brilliance seems now to be linked to selfishness. Alcibiades picks up the word twice in his reply [vi.16.3 and 5], once to justify his splendid lifestyle, and once to mention that such splendid people as himself are often hated in their lifetimes but loved by posterity. By repeating the word in his speech Alcibiades is obviously mocking Nicias' use of ἐλλαμπρύνεσθαι. He also makes a connection between it and Athenian splendour, for he claims that his glory only makes Athens more impressive to other states. There is a strong connection between λαμπρότης and selfishness in this speech, since Alcibiades is most concerned with his own glory. Once more, λαμπρότης is used just before a reference to its end (even if only for the moment for Alcibiades). The Athenians soon begin to distrust him and they subsequently turn against him [vi.15.4][10].

Λαμπρότης is clearly and unequivocally linked to the Sicilian expedition in book vi [31.6]. In his description of the sight of the fleet in the harbour at Piraeus, Thucydides says that it caused wonder through its daring and through the splendour of its appearance. Here the visual nature of λαμπρότης is emphasised by the noun ὄψεως by which it is defined. The suggestion of impermanence is present as before. Since the reader is well aware that the expedition will fail because Thucydides has already stated this [ii.65.11], the repeated use of λαμπρότης in the *History* seems to enhance the effect of inevitability about the failure.

In his speech to the Athenians before the final battle in the harbour at Syracuse, Nicias urges them not to betray the splendour of their past achievments by failure now [vii.69.2]. Thucydides comments that the speech seemed inadequate to Nicias himself, considering the

hopelessness of the Athenian position [vii.69.3]. Appeals to the glories of the past through old-fashioned platitudes are of no use in this situation as Thucydides says [vii.69.2]. Such mention of former glory was of no help to the Plataeans. Perhaps, through the repetition of λαμπρότης, Thucydides is ironically recalling the fate of Plataea which was abandoned by Athens. Also, by the repetition of the word Nicias used of Alcibiades, Thucydides may be recalling the absence of Alcibiades at this moment, the contrast between his leadership and that of Nicias and the ephemerality of Athens' victorious career in the area.

Thucydides refers directly to his account of the gathering of the expedition [vi.31.6] when he compares its splendour with the Athenians' sufferings in the stone quarries of Syracuse [vii.75.6]. He mentions their former λαμπρότης and contrasts it with the horrors of the present. The use of λαμπρότης here also recalls its use by the Plataeans about their past splendours in comparison with their present situation. The idea seems now clear that λαμπρότης is an ephemeral state, will not protect its holder against disaster, and is apparent just before a fall.

The final mention of λαμπρότης in the *History* is made at the end of book vii [87.5]. Here, Thucydides sums up the disaster in Sicily and calls it the most splendid (λαμπρότατον) for the victors and the most unfortunate (δυστυχέστατον) for the defeated.[7] If his use of λαμπρότης is indeed deliberate and calculated for effect, then Thucydides is pointing out that, however splendid the victory, the Sicilians will find that the splendour does not last; as it did not. By 406 Sicily was again facing disaster.

Virginia Hunter[11] in a study of historical process asks whether the Syracusans are to be considered the successors of Athens, since they

united, however temporarily, for the common good, something which the Athenians failed to do. The duration of their power is also a problem to be faced in this question. She adds that "Thucydides work in its incompleteness does not offer the reader an unequivocal answer to this question. There seems no reason to be optimistic." The pessimistic conclusion is probably the correct one, but Thucydides implies an answer by using λαμπρότατον for the Sicilian victory. Connor notes the repetition of λαμπρότης in the *History* and calls it "a shifting and ambiguous assessment of events, the possession of the most recent victor."[12]

A study of Thucydides' use of this word and its variants shows that it does shift from individual to individual (Themistocles to Alcibiades) and from state to state (Athens to Syracuse). Thucydides has carefully used a word that he seems to regard as loaded with negative aspects; there is an implication that the Syracusans' splendour, too, will be ephemeral. This he knew to be true, since he lived long enough to see how affairs turned out in Sicily. It also, possibly, emphasised his pessimistic view of history as an inevitable process of great splendour followed quickly by decline. In using λαμπρότατον of the Sicilian victory he is merely pointing out that it is now their turn to fail.

The concept of λαμπρότης in the *History* embraces great splendour which is short-lived. By associating λαμπρότης with selected incidents which soon end disastrously for the individuals or states involved, Thucydides implies that such disaster is connected with their possession of λαμπρότης. This suggests that his view of events is a tragic one: splendour can be achieved but it is ephemeral and its loss soon follows. For Thucydides, Athens enjoyed λαμπρότης under Pericles.

Chance in the form of the plague removed him and, then, through her own weaknesses Athens fell. Perhaps, as the Spartans advised Athens [iv.18.4], wisdom lies in making the best of good times by using one's advantages carefully and by being well aware that circumstances can change unexpectedly.

CHAPTER THREE

ΣΦΑΛΛΕΙΝ / ΕΣΘΑΙ

Σφάλλειν/εσθαι is often used in the *History* and is usually translated as 'to cause to fail, to fail'. The failure referred to may be military or political (failure in battle or failure of the state)[1] or intellectual (failure of hopes or plans).[2] Σφάλλειν/εσθαι is also used of both sides in the war but by far the greatest number of examples is found in connection with Athens. In this chapter it will be argued that Thucydides' use of σφάλλειν/εσθαι, although it may refer to failure of different kinds, illustrates a particular concept of failure, particularly Athenian failure, especially in books i to vii. Failure, he seems to suggest through repetition, can happen through one's own mistakes, e.g. through over-confidence, or sometimes through sheer bad luck over which one has no control, although it may sometimes be possible to mitigate the effect of failure through caution and foresight.

Thucydides uses a number of words for failure. The verb νικᾶν/ᾶσθαι and words derived from it are found in the *History* over twice as many times as σφάλλειν/εσθαι. The basic meaning of νικᾶν/ᾶσθαι is 'to conquer, prevail in a military or athletic contest' or 'to be conquered'. The frequent use of this verb in a work that deals primarily with war is not remarkable, as the victory of one side implies the defeat and failure of the other. Νικᾶν/ᾶσθαι also has an intellectual meaning that refers to the victory of a particular opinion or judgement. Like his predecessor, Herodotus, Thucydides uses νικαω in both these meanings in both narrative and speech portions of the text.[3]

Another word that refers to a failure is ἁμαρτάνειν. Its literal meaning is 'to miss the mark' and hence to fail. Like σφάλλειν/εσθαι it has a number of uses that refer to military or intellectual situations but most often its meaning seems more closely linked to doing or being wrong, making errors of judgement or having mistaken opinions. Although ἁμαρτάνειν is frequently found in the speeches, Thucydides also uses it in his narrative. Herodotus, too, uses ἁμαρτάνειν to refer to military and intellectual mistakes, but he does not use it as often as does Thucydides.[4]

Πταιειν has a very similar meaning to σφάλλειν/εσθαι. It means 'to stumble, fall' and its metaphorical meaning is 'to fail'. It is used by Thucydides seven times, either in speeches or in the narrative sections in which Thucydides gives his interpretation of events. The contexts in which it occurs include failure associated with confidence or emotion. It sometimes occurs in the same chapter as σφάλλειν/εσθαι and seems in those instances to be used as a synonym or alternative for σφάλλειν/εσθαι. It is used twice in antithesis with ὀρθοῦν or its compound form κατορθοῦν, which means 'to set right' and which is found also in antithesis with σφάλλειν/εσθαι, e.g. vi.12.1. Thus the meanings of the two words seem to be very close. Herodotus sometimes uses the term in the compound form προσπταίειν rather than πταίειν.[5] This form is not found in Thucydides.

Σφάλλειν/εσθαι occurs in Greek literature from Homer onwards. Its basic meaning seems to be to cause a physical fall, e.g. to trip up an opponent so that he falls, e.g. *Odyssey* xvii.464. It is also used of a the blow from a weapon causing a fall, e.g. *Iliad* xxiii.719. It is then a vivid term and probably carried this force when used of intellectual

failure or fall. Herodotus uses σφάλλειν/εσθαι seven times for failure in both intellectual and military senses.[6] It occurs most frequently in speeches, in both the verb and in the noun form σφάλμα in book vii, where the preparations for Xerxes' invasion of Greece are described. Here, σφάλλειν/εσθαι is frequently found in a warning context of possible disaster and reversal of fortune.[7] It does not appear to be used by Herodotus in the same kind of antithesis with ασφαλεια as it is by Thucydides.

Thucydides makes much greater use of σφάλλειν/εσθαι than does his predecessor. As in Herodotus, σφάλλειν/εσθαι in Thucydides' work refers to both physical, i.e. military, and intellectual failure, i.e. failure of hope. The word itself is found fifty-three times[8] with a further four instances of the noun form σφάλμα, and one of the superlative form of the adjective σφαλερός. Besides these instances the word seems repeated and recalled through its frequent antithesis with ἀσφάλεια, which is translated as 'security' but the root of which is closely related to σφάλμα and its variants. Furthermore, Thucydides uses σφάλλειν/εσθαι only in speeches or in his summaries. This may indicate that it is for him a vivid word or one with a special meaning. Its use and repetition and its recall through ἀσφάλεια may be deliberate and, although the failures described are of different kinds, the contexts for the word suggest that Thucydides may be using it to underline his interpretation of Athenian failure, as well as of failure in general as part of the process of history.

This survey of Thucydides' use of σφάλλειν/εσθαι will begin with Thucydides' own words in which he summarises the war [ii.65], a chapter that contains repetition of σφάλλειν/εσθαι in what appears to be a significant context. Its uses and implications in books i to viii will

then be considered.

Σφάλλειν/εσθαι is used three times during a single chapter, ii.65. Firstly, the state can fail through private ambition, although this may bring success for the individuals concerned [ii.65.7]; secondly, the Athenians fail in Sicily through the intrigues of individuals at Athens [ii.65.12]; and, lastly, Athens eventually fails in the whole war through her own fault. She held out for another eight years[9] after the Sicilian disaster and only failed in the end through internal faction [ii.65.12].

In this carefully crafted chapter both ἁμαρτάνειν and σφάλλειν/εσθαι are used for the failure of the Sicilian expedition. The use of ἁμαρτάνειν here also, suggesting that Athens missed the mark in Sicily, may reflect a later assessment of the importance of the expedition's failure, as the chapter seems later than the account of the Sicilian expedition in books vi and vii.[10] Σφάλλειν/εσθαι on the other hand seems to be used repeatedly here for failure in a context of Athenian internal faction, emotion or ambition. It is also recalled and contrasted clearly with Pericles' period of control at Athens through its antithesis with ἀσφαλῶς, which Thucydides uses to describe Pericles' success in office.

The use and repetition of σφάλλειν/εσθαι in this chapter seems to show a considered literary technique. In the penultimate sentence the word both begins the sentence [σφαλέντες], where it refers to the Sicilian expedition, and ends it [ἐσφάλησαν], where it is used of the whole war. The final sentence emphasises by alliteration and paronomasia the pre-eminence of Pericles and his foresight [Περικλεῖ ἐπερίσσευσε ... προέγνω ... περιγενέσθαι]. The repetition of

σφάλλειν/εσθαι in this chapter suggests a link between Athens' failure and her over-confidence, ambition and internal divisions, and again seems to recall the 'unfailure' [ἀσφαλῶς] of the period of Pericles' power.

It is interesting also that in several places in the *History* σφάλλειν/εσθαι is found in the protasis of a conditional sentence.[11] Repetition of such a phrase as 'if we fail' by those whom the reader knows will fail is a common method of dramatic foreshadowing. The greatest number of usages of this construction is with reference to Athens. This may be another way in which Thucydides is stressing Athenian failure through his repetition of σφάλλειν/εσθαι.

During their speech to the Spartans about the need to take action against Athens, the Gorinthians use σφάλλειν/εσθαι twice. The first occurrence [i.69.5] refers to the failure of the Persians in the Great War. Σφάλλειν/εσθαι here appears to emphasize the idea of a fall from a position of strength. Persian forces outnumbered the Greek, and their failure was an unlikely outcome. The Corinthians say that it was the Persians' own fault that they failed (σφάλλειν/εσθαι), since it was through their own errors (περὶ αὐτῷ τὰ πλείω). They further state that they themselves have only been able to stand up to Athens because Athens has made mistakes (τοῖς ἁμαρτήμασιν). Persia and Athens are thus associated, and Thucydides has Corinth make Athens another Persia. Here, a dramatic parallel is drawn by Corinthian speakers to urge Sparta to act quickly. In this example, failure through one's own error is associated with Persia (a known spectacular fall), and the possibility of failure through her own mistakes may be linked with Athens.

Boldness and over-confidence are associated with failure [i.70.7] in the contrast made by the Corinthians between the Spartan and Athenian

character. The Spartans are slow and hesitant, while the Athenians are quick, daring and acquisitive. If the latter fail (σφαλῶσιν), their self-confidence soon enables them to make up the loss in some other way. This may be a foreshadowing of Athenian recovery both after Amphipolis [iv.108] and after Sicily [viii.24]. In both instances Thucydides says that Athens' opponents underestimated her capacity to recover. The ability to recover quickly, which might be throught a proof of strength, is here treated as though it were evidence of a defect in the Athenian character and proof of their driving ambition.

In their speech at the Spartan Congress [i.122.4] the Corinthians dismiss as a possible reason why the Spartans have taken no action against Athens so far the fact that they feel themselves superior to the Athenians. Such unwise [ἀφροσύνη] feelings of superiority, they warn, have brought failure to many in the past. Failure is again expressed by σφάλλειν/εσθαι and emphasised through πταίω [i.122.1]. Thus, in these examples from the Peloponnesians' point of view, it might be said that σφάλλειν/εσθαι has been placed in a context of boldness, over-confidence and lack of caution, usually in connection with Athens. When Pericles [i.140.1] appeals to the Athenians to continue supporting his policies, he refers to the possibility of occasional failure. Here, the fact that failure can be something unexpected is stressed by the term παρὰ λόγον. Pericles, as Thucydides example of the wise statesman, has foresight, caution and a proper respect for the element of chance and the unforseen. This contrasts with the picture of Athenian democracy in post-Periclean Athens, e.g. as encapsulated in the character of the popular demagogue Cleon, and as portrayed in the undertaking of the whole of the Sicilian expedition.

The idea of possible Athenian failure is repeated [i.143.5], should Athens fight Sparta on land. This is followed by Pericles' reasons for fearing the future. The Athenians should not be too confident nor downhearted, nor should they try to increase the size of their empire while they are at war. Pericles then adds that he is afraid, not so much of the enemy's plans, but of Athenian mistakes. Once again it seems that a reference to Athenian emotionalism [ὀργισθέντας] occurs in conjunction with σφάλλειν/εσθαι.

In the first book of the *History* σφάλλειν/εσθαι has been used by representatives on both sides in the war. Each time, the failure spoken of seems to refer to Athens in some way, as well as to emotionalism or a lack of heedfulness; these contrast with the caution espoused by Pericles.

The Athenians are reminded by Pericles [ii.61-64] of their decision to follow his policies whatever the cost. They have since suffered the outbreak of the plague and the destruction of their crops, and have begun to question the wisdom of his strategy. Their feelings are mentioned by Thucydides as an example of Athenian emotionalism, one which Pericles is able, this time, to bring under control [ii.59]. In trying to restore their confidence Pericles says that the individual is better off when the state is being run by general consensus than when an individual satisfies his own ambition while the state is failing [ii.60.2]. The state declines when individual interests replace the common good. Here, the idea of selfish ambition is introduced. It is repeated by Thucydides at ii.65 as one of his explanations for the eventual defeat of Athens. Thus, in the second book Thucydides seems to suggest that there is a link between σφάλλειν/εσθαι, and the rise of personal ambition.

The Spartans fail in a sea-battle at Rhium, which ends Spartan activity at sea for a time. In their speech at ii.87 the Spartan generals use σφάλλειν/εσθαι three times. Sparta fails in her first battle at sea because of bad luck and inexperience [ii.87.2]; all men fail in this way at some time, but this should not make them lose courage [ii.87.3]; Sparta will not fail again, because she can learn from her mistakes [ii.87.7]. Σφάλλειν/εσθαι, then, is not associated with Athens alone, but it can be experienced by all. It does not necessarily have to be one's own fault but can be the result of simple bad luck; the Spartans assert that they can learn from their mistakes. The instances of σφάλλειν/εσθαι in this speech show that failure can be one's own fault, as it seems to be frequently for Athens, or can happen through sheer misfortune, which happens to all men at some time. The only way to deal with it is to try to learn from one's mistakes, as the Spartans claim they will. Athens after Pericles, in Thucydides' account, does not follow such a careful and reasonable policy.

In book iii, during their appeal to Sparta for help in their revolt against Athens, the Mytileneans emphasize that the good of all will be affected if their rebellion fails [iii.14.1]. They are exaggerating the importance of their failure through fear of the strong Athenian response to their rebellion, and in order to persuade Sparta to help. Σφάλλειν/εσθαι is used in the context of strong emotion and is the kind of failure that can happen to anyone despite cautious preparation [iii.2 and 3].

Cleon, in a speech in the debate over the punishment of Mytilene, proposes that Athens should not rescind her decree on the island's fate. Passed by the Assembly and supported by Cleon, this decree prescribed

the extremely harsh punishments to be imposed on the Mytileneans. Cleon claims that to change laws so quickly would reveal a weakness in the democratic system. It would also show that those individuals who allowed such swift changes of policy are too clever and not to be trusted. Their action would, in fact, cause the state to fail [iii.37.4]. For Thucydides, Cleon is a prime example of the kind of individual influencing Athenian policy after Pericles, and one of those who caused the failure of the state through selfish ambition. The use of σφάλλειν/εσθαι also seems to make an ironic connection between Cleon's words, at iii.37.4, on government by the man in the street, and those of Thucydides, at ii. 65, on Pericles' control of Athens as 'without failure'.

Later in the same speech [iii.39.7 and 8], Cleon makes two references to failure. A distinction should be made in the severity of the punishment between those who rebel willingly and those who are forced to do so, otherwise no one would fear failure for their state. He adds that, if Athens failed in an attempt to put down such revolts, the result could be fatal for her, since the ensuing financial and military losses would affect her control of the empire. Rebellion amongst the allies of Athens is a possibility which Thucydides mentions elsewhere in the *History* [iv.108, viii.2], and detaching allies from Athens was a policy followed with success by Brasidas [iv.102-116]. Cleon's response to a possibility of this kind of failure is to advocate a speedy and violent solution. Cleon also mentions that the Athenians lack πρόνοια when it comes to seeing where their impulses will lead them [iii.38.6] but suggests that decisions made quickly and under the influence of one's initial feelings [ὀργη] are best.

In his reply Diodotus contradicts Cleon's statements and stresses

the fact that failure results from decisions made under the influence of emotions. When the Athenians fail as a result of such an impulse [ὀργη iii.43.5], they turn on the man who made the original proposal, despite the fact that the majority of citizens agreed to it. They had earlier turned on Pericles in the same way [ii.59.2]. Diodotus suggests that fear of punishment for wrong decisions might make them act more wisely. In both speeches in this book σφάλλειν/εσθαι seems to be associated with failure through ambition and strong emotion.

Such strong emotion is also referred to in the account of the revolution at Corcyra [iii.84.3].[8] Σφάλλειν/εσθαι is used here of those who fail while the common laws of humanity no longer operate when a state is controlled by those wanting revenge.

Care and foresight to guard against failure are mentioned by the Spartans in their armistice proposals to Athens after Pylos [iv.18.2]. Once more the Spartans seem prepared to learn from their mistakes and admit that their plans failed because they did not make proper use of their resources. Thucydides may also be implying that Sparta showed a lack of πρόνοια, since he states [iv.5.1] that the Spartans did not take the Athenian action at Pylos seriously enough at first. Athens is advised to make peace on favourable terms, since worse will follow should Athens fail in the future [iv.18.5]. At the moment of advantage over Sparta Athens is being reminded that failure is always possible, and that a policy of caution is best. The vivid σφάλλειν/εσθαι is here emphasised by the use of πταίω. The Athenians ignore the warning and reject the Spartan offer through greed, in Thucydides' opinion - τοῦ δὲ πλέονος ὠρέγοντο [iv.21.2]. The use of σφάλλειν/εσθαι for failure in these passages seems to suggest that the word is linking failure with

Athenian ambition and greed and with lack of foresight on both sides.

Thucydides describes the feelings of what he calls 'the more thoughtful citizens' [iv.28.5] over Cleon's boast that he will defeat Sparta at Pylos in twenty days. These citizens felt that they would gain whatever the outcome of Pylos. Either Cleon would be killed, as they expected, or they would have the Spartans in their power. The confidence of their expectation (ἐλπίς) is linked with σφάλλειν/εσθαι but, in the event, they are wrong. Cleon's success at Pylos, as Thucydides relates the story, was the reason why the Athenians so confidently and ambitiously rejected peace afterwards. Here, σφάλλειν/εσθαι is used of the disappointment of hope, but its use may also demonstrate how serious the failure of their hopes turned out to be for these citizens and for Athens.[12] Cleon and the other demagogues have already been linked to σφάλλειν/εσθαι by Thucydides [ii.65]. Pylos was a disaster for Sparta [iv.18, 85.2, v.17.1] and, although it was a successful action for Athens, led to her rejection of peace, a rejection that is repeatedly attributed to greed throughout this book in very similar words [iv.21.2, 41.3, 92.2].[13] It is as though Thucydides sees this incident as a particularly important one for Athens.

The possibility of the failure of individual aims is mentioned by Hermocrates in the Sicilian peace conference at Gela [iv.62.3]. Such failure may involve one's destruction or the giving up of present gains. Failure, Hermocrates adds, is always a possibility, and the future uncertain. Caution is the wisest policy against the incalculable element of the future, and the possibility of failure can be seen as useful [iv.62.4, where the adjective σφαλερος is used]. If everyone fears failure, then this fear will make them act more cautiously. Failure involving significant loss and the need for caution are now introduced

into a Sicilian context by the person who represents a reasoned and cautious policy. As this word has also been associated with Athenian failure both in Sicily and in the war [ii.65], the use of it here may recall that Athens fails in Sicily and that her failure might be linked to her ambition and lack of proper caution.

When the Athenian generals decide not to fight Brasidas at Megara, it is because a failure would mean the loss of the Athenian hoplite force [iv.73.4]. Here, σφάλλειν/εσθαι is used of this possible failure which would mean a significant loss of strength for Athens. To attack Brasidas at this point, they feel, is risky and most Athenian objectives have been gained already. This seems to be an instance of σφάλλειν/εσθαι in connection with more cautious Athenian policy. There was no failure in this case but its possibility is linked to risk and serious loss. Even so, the decision resulted eventually in the loss of Athenian influence and so eventual failure in Megara.

In book iv it appears that the possibility of failure through ambition and the avoidance of failure through caution, as well as a link between Sicily and Athens, are being suggested through the use of σφάλλειν/εσθαι.

The Athenian defeats at Delium and Amphipolis are referred to by Thucydides as σφάλματα [v.14.2] to suggest that they were disastrous losses. Herodotus uses σφάλμα in a similar way to describe a disaster [ix.9]. These disasters bring a marked change in Athenian feelings and underline Thucydides' suggestions (as put in the mouth of Pericles) that the Athenians are volatile and tend to over-react [ii.59 and 65]. Their failure may also be connected with the greed and ambition that Thucydides has stressed throughout this book.

Nicias, the cautious Athenian general who is later to take part in the expedition to Sicily, gives his reasons for representing the cause of peace at v.16.1. He wants to avoid taking risks and trust luck as little as possible. He also wishes stop the suffering quickly and to be remembered as one who had not caused the state to fail. Again, σφάλλειν/εσθαι, backed by the use of πταίω here, appears to be used in the context of the more cautious policy of Nicias. It has, however, already been used [ii.65] of the failure in which Nicias was involved in Sicily. Perhaps Thucydides may be suggesting that sometimes such caution can be just as disastrous as over-confidence.

During the Melian dialogue [v.84-116] σφάλλειν/εσθαι is used four times. At v.90 the Melians, in appealing for justice from Athens, warn the Athenian representatives that Athens' failure in war will be an example to all.[14] Σφάλλειν/εσθαι here is linked to possible failure for Athens. When the Melians claim that they still hope for success, the Athenians reply that such hope is useless. Its true nature is only seen for what it is in time of failure [v.103.]. After the disaster at Syracuse [vii.75.6] the Athenians see the true nature of hope for themselves when they experience a major failure. Complete failure for Melos is predicted by the Athenians who tell the Melians that the only certainty is what they see before them [v.113]. If the Melians trust in luck, hope and Spartan promises, they will fail (as the Mytileneans failed when they relied on Sparta [iii.14]). The Athenian reply here is a very practical one, as it deals with the immediate reality. The Athenians dismiss the Melians' reliance on hope and luck to save them and reveal their confidence in their own power. The position and prominence given to this dialogue may well be meant to illustrate the irony of Athenian pride and strength just before her undertaking of the

expedition to Sicily, its subsequent reliance on hope and luck and its eventual failure.

In a discussion of Thucydides' account of the Sicilian expedition, to which two books of the *History* are devoted, Hornblower suggests that it is one of the events 'inflated' by Thucydides. for artistic or other purposes, beyond their true importance *for the outcome of the war.*[15] [sic]. In this book Thucydides' use of σφάλλειν/εσθαι is more frequent than before.

In his first speech to the Assembly Nicias talks of the consequence for Athens if a considerable Athenian force should fail in Sicily [vi.10.2]. The use of σφάλλειν/εσθαι for this potential failure may recall its use at ii.65 for the actual failure. There may also be an ironic link with the use of σφάλλειν/εσθαι of Nicias' hope that he will not be a cause of failure to his state [v.16.1]. Again [vi.11.4] he warns that any Athenian failure in Sicily will cause the Sicilians to join in a concerted attack on Athens with her other enemies. This, then, would be a serious consequence of failure for Athens. σφάλλειν/εσθαι is backed by the use of παίω [vi.12.4]. Nicias mentions a similar idea of any failure resulting in the whole of Sicily being hostile to Athens [vi.23.3]. The Athenians' response to his warning contains another example of σφάλλειν/εσθαι [vi.24.3]. They in fact believe that so large a force could not fail. Their emotions about the expedition are stressed in this chapter by such words as ἐπιθυμοῦν ... ἐξηρέθησαν ... ὥρμηντο ... ἔρως ... πόθω ... εὐέλπιδες. The repetition of σφάλλειν/εσθαι in connection with the Sicilian expedition both in this book, through its use by Nicias and in Thucydides' summary and in books iv, v and ii, suggest that Thucydides is making ironic connections. The

reasons for the failure appear the same as he seems to have suggested previously through the use of σφάλλειν/εσθαι - Athenian ambition and over-confidence. A further reason is given by Thucydides when he states that the Athenians caused the city's failure in Sicily through their fear and emotional rejection of the ambitious Alcibiades, despite the fact that his conduct of the war to this point had been excellent [vi.15.5].

Athenian failure occurring through Athenian mistakes is mentioned by Hermocrates [vi.33.5]. He foresees it coming from a lack of proper supplies and emphasises it through the use of πταιω [vi.33.6]; he also declares that the failure of the Persians was due to luck and not because of Athenian cleverness against them [vi.33.6]. This reference links Persia and Athens again in the suggestion of a self-inflicted disaster, just as the Corinthians did earlier [i.69.5] but, this time, the context is clearly Sicilian. The repetition of σφάλλειν/εσθαι may be meant to recall the earlier reference and help build up the idea of the importance of this Athenian failure, and that it it their own fault, since it was caused by their own mistakes.

After the Athenian defeat at Epipolae [vii.47.3], Demosthenes advises them not to remain in Sicily. They have already been defeated at sea [vii.41], and Epipolae was Demosthenes' attempt to take advantage of the surprise of his arrival to gain a quick victory. The use of σφάλλειν/εσθαι for this defeat perhaps shows the importance of the action for Demosthenes. It was to be the decisive one, in his estimation, and on its result hung the decision whether the Athenians should stay in Sicily or return to Attica [vii.47]. The failure at Epipolae seems to involve the Athenians inextricably in complete failure in Sicily.

Nicias [vii.61] and Gylippus [vii.66-68] refer to failure several times in their speeches. Nicias encourages the Athenians not to despair. They should not behave like inexperienced soldiers for whom first failures seem so devastating, but they must trust to luck and the unpredictable. The context in which σφάλλειν/εσθαι is used contrasts with the arguments on hope and luck used by the Athenians in the Melian dialogue. There they dismissed the belief in chance and hope and forecast Melian failure based on their practical assessment of the here and now.

Gylippus accurately predicts the feelings of the Athenians when he describes their failure in something unexpected [cf.vi.24.3, 86]. Σφάλλειν/εσθαι is used three times in this speech [vii.66.3, 67.2, 68.3] for failure of different kinds. The Athenians never expected to fail, their ships will fail when they fight (a foreshadowing of the events of the battle in the harbour), and it is rare for failure to bring no great loss. These statements about Athenian failure have either been previously mentioned as true by Thucydides [vi.24.3] or will be proved to be so by the subsequent narrative of the end of the expedition.

The possibility of failure is linked to the Syracusans too [vi.75.1], when they decide to build a wall to cut off the Athenian blockading wall at Epipolae. The use of the construction ἤν ... σφάλλωνται may foreshadow their subsequent defeat here [vi.97 and 100], one that at the time may have seemed important, since at this point in the campaign, the Athenians still appeared capable of success.

Hermocrates makes Sicilian unity the main point of his speech to the Camarineans [vi.80.2].[16] He refers to the failure of those who will

be defeated because they have not received help from their fellow Sicilians, and defines *προμηθία* - the policy of caution - as neither fair nor safe, since it would mean opposing neither Athens nor Camarina [vi.80.1]. Caution, then, may not always be the best policy. Hermocrates then makes an appeal for unity which sets the possibility of failure against background of disunity - the same point that Thucydides made in ii.65 about Athenian failure and internal disunity.

In book viii Thucydides develops the statement made at ii.65.12. There, the Athenian failure in the war as a whole is attributed to internal weakness through faction and division. Book viii appears to show a different approach from books i to vii, e.g. in book viii the Sicilian expedition is no longer the *πανωλεθρία* described in book vii but it is said only to have appeared great at the time [viii.96.1], and *σφάλλειν/εσθαι*, while still recalling the idea of final failure mentioned at ii.65, seems to refer more to the failure of the Athenians to remain united, as well as the failure of others to understand that Athens was not yet finished [viii.24.5].

Failure in the case of the Chians [viii.24.5] and the Corinthians [viii.32.1 and 3], came through underestimating the strength of Athenian resistance. Such failure, Thucydides says, is evidence of the unexpected in the life of man. The Chians were normally cautious, but even they could make unlucky decisions. *Σφάλμα* is used for the disaster to the Chians. *Ἁμαρτία* in the same sentence seems to refer to others who thought the same way but did not actually join the revolt. Although Thucydides seems to be associating *σφάλλειν/εσθαι* with failure through one's own fault, particularly in the case of Athens, chance also is shown to play a role in human affairs.

Some Athenian defeats are called *σφάλματα* in this book. Andrewes

suggests that this may be because Athenian lack of confidence up to this point, and their fear of the Spartan fleet may have made them seem so [viii.106.2].[17] They also suggest a great contrast in feelings at Athens before and after the victory at Cynossema. Through the use of σφάλλειν/εσθαι and σφάλμα, Thucydides may mean the reader to recall other instances of Athenian emotional swings tied to other failures.

The other three references to σφάλλειν/εσθαι in book viii are to internal failure through the operation of individual factions of some kind connected with Athens. The Athenian army at Samos considers the possibility of the failure of its plans against Athens [viii.76.7]. Alcibiades persuades them not to sail against the Piraeus, as the failure of either side in the dispute would mean that no reasonable settlement could be made [viii.86.7]. The effect of party division on the ordinary citizen is the last point made using σφάλλειν/εθαι. People are afraid to speak out against the Five Thousand at Athens, in case such a mistake should be fatal.

Σφάλλειν/εσθαι, σφαλμα and σφαλερός seem to be used by Thucydides in contexts which suggest that the failure described, whether military, political or intellectual, is to be linked with over-ambition, over-emotion or lack of caution, particularly in the case of Athens. The frequency of its use in connection with Athens underlines the character which the Athenians are given in the *History*, that of an ambitious and over-confident people. Under the cautious Pericles Thucydides suggests that these tendencies could be checked for the most part so that Pericles' period of control at Athens is described as being 'without failure' [ἀσφαλῶς], although the failure of the expedition to Egypt and the loss of Athens' land empire occurred in this period. In addition,

the Athenians are early characterised as quick, restless, daring [i.70.7] and soon able to make up for failure through their ambition. Their quick recovery from later losses, e.g. at Delium and Amphipolis, a recovery that is not anticipated by their opponents, thus seems to be suggested as proof of their ambition rather than of their strength. In this way Thucydides' interpretation of events may be affected by his views on the meaning of security.

Others are shown to fail too, e.g. the Spartans. This is explained by the operation of luck or inexperience. All men are subject to this kind of failure, although the wise can be aware of its possibility, learn from their mistakes, and remember the unpredictable element in the future, as Pericles, Archidamus, Hermocrates and Nicias warn [i.140,84, and iii.62]. After Pericles the Athenians seem not to remember this, in Thucydides' account, and to move towards an ultimate failure, the failure in Sicily, emphasised and recalled, particularly in books i to vii, through the repetition of σφάλλειν/εσθαι. Over-caution, too, may be a cause of failure, as Nicias hoped not to be a cause of failure for his city. It was he who exaggerated the needs of the Sicilian campaign, thus causing the Athenians to dispatch an even larger force than was originally intended, and it was Nicias who was involved in the disastrous end of the expedition. Complete security, as the Spartans suggested, is not possible [iv.18], since there is always an unpredictable element in human affairs. For Athens it seems that failure was not so much the result of misfortune as caused by her own faults, i.e. her ambition, greed and over-emotionalism.

CHAPTER FOUR

ἈΣΦΑΛΕΙΑ

The adjective ἀσφαλής occurs once in Homer and means 'not liable to fall' e.g. *Odyssey* vi.42. This meaning is also found in later authors, e.g. Hesiod, *Theogony* 128 and Pindar, *Nemean* vi.3. Ἀσφαλής is also used metaphorically and is usually translated as 'safe' or 'secure'. The adverbial form ἀσφαλῶς, 'safely' occurs frequently from Homer onwards. The neuter form of the adjective and the definite article were used as a substantive, e.g. Pindar, *Pythian* iii.36; the noun ἀσφάλεια appears to be a fifth-century form found no earlier than Herodotus.[1] All these variations of ασφαλης occur in Thucydides' *History*. As ἀσφαλής is a rather negative way of describing safety, as an absence of falling, failure or misfortune (ἀ - σφάλλειν), this negative aspect should be an important element in its meaning. It should, therefore, be distinguished from σωτηρία and its compounds; these refer positively to safety and, as far as can be ascertained, do not have a negative connotation.

In the *History*, the use of the different forms of ἀσφαλής may be divided into two types. The first is the personal safety of an individual or a group in a specific situation, e.g. i.107.3, where a Spartan force will not cross Geraneia because it is held by Athens and, therefore, not safe for them. There are many other examples of its use in this sense of physical safety.[2] It is not surprising to find frequent use of a word describing physical safety in a work that deals with war. The participants' personal safety and possible fall/failure is of major concern to them and their leaders. Many examples in this

group are of safety - ἀσφάλεια - in battle and refer to avoiding a physical fall [iii.105.4]. The Greek metaphor here is much the same as the English 'to fall in action'. The literal meaning, i.e. not falling down, is most clearly seen at iii.22.3 where the Plataeans try to escape the Spartan siege. They leave the city in secret and by night, are lightly armed, so as not to be heard, and wear only one shoe - ἀσφαλείας ἕνεκα - to prevent their slipping and falling down in the mud.

The second type, which will be considered in detail in this chapter, is that of the security against loss or failure for the polis. It is here that Thucydides uses ἀσφάλεια or the older form τὸ ἀσφαλές to emphasise the nature of such security as an absence of serious failure or loss. Ἀσφάλεια in this sense is mostly found in speeches and summaries. The word ἀσφάλεια is also often found in antithesis with σφάλλειν/εσθαι, e.g. ii.65.5 and 12 and in association with phrases that indicate risk [κίνδυνος], e.g. i.75.4, the need for forethought [πρόνοια], e.g.i.84.4, and suggest a definition of a wise or moderate policy [σωφροσύνη].

The use of ἀσφάλεια as a key word in Spartan concepts of security reveals an interpretation very different from the Athenian. For the Spartans, as exemplified by Archidamus [i.79-85] and as shown in the Corinthians' speech [i.68-71], security lies in slow, careful consideration and forethought [i.79-85]. Such forethought is attributed to Pericles also, and Athens was controlled safely by him in Thucydides' opinion [ii.65]. For the Athenian speakers at the Spartan assembly [i.73-8] security lies in maintaining and even increasing the size of their empire since it is not safe to let it go. These attitudes towards security in turn underline another theme of Thucydides' interpretation

of events - the contrast in character between Athenians and Spartans. Thucydides, then, may also be studying the effects of failure on other states as well as Athens. In his introduction to the *History* Thucydides claims that the work is not merely a record of events but an attempt to reveal how human nature will react and continue to react in similar ways under similar stresses [i.22]. Thucydides seems to suggest that an inevitable part of human experience is failure at some time or another. The consideration given to security, i.e. the absence of failure, ασφαλεια, by each side in the war, and their reaction to it when it occurs, reveal not only the characters of the participants but also demonstrate Thucydides' conclusions about humanity in general.

The Corcyreans in their dispute with Corinth, which Thucydides highlights as one of the immediate causes of the war, use the argument of security against failure in order to persuade the Athenians to make an alliance with them [i.32 - 36]. A form of ἀσφάλεια is used twice in this speech and emphasises the point that their appeal to Athens is one to the further security of her empire. Corcyra used to think that a policy of neutrality was the wise one - ἡ σωφροσύνη. They will now adopt a bolder line [i.32.5 -τολμῶμεν], and make no concessions which might endanger their security [i.34.3]. If the Athenians reject the Corcyrean offer, they will show a lack of πρόνοια, especially over their western ambitions, since war is now inevitable, in Corcyra's opinion [i.36.]. An alliance would bring security to both Corcyra and Athens [i.33.2], and Athenian security against failure lies in increasing her power over the Peloponnesians by adding Corcyra's ships to her fleet [i.34.2]. Security, the power of the Athenian empire and fleet, Athenian ambition, and the risk of war with Sparta are all brought into association.

The Corinthians in their reply mention ἀσφάλεια four times [i.37.1, 39.1,3 and 40.2]. This both echoes the use of ἀσφάλεια by the Corcyreans and gives the Corinthians' own interpretation of it. They want to give Athens the clearest possible idea of the Corinthian side of the affair, and what their idea of the best policy is in this situation, so that there should be no failure to understand what is at stake. They reject the Corcyreans' offer of arbitration as useless, since Corcyra is already secure, because she has made an appeal for Athenian help. This appeal should have been made more properly earlier, when Corcyra enjoyed greater security, i.e. when she was not involved in a dispute with Corinth. It would be wrong for Athens to accept an alliance with Corcyra, since Corcyra is in revolt from Corinth, and the result of such an alliance would be war between Corinth and Athens. To enter an alliance with a rebel looking for security, as Corcyra is, would not be a wise move - εἰ σωφρονοῦσι [i.40.2]. In fact, the wise course (σῶφρον) would be to make the Corinthians less suspicious of Athenian motives [i.42.2]. The Corcyrean claim that theirs is the policy of wisdom (τὸ σῶφρον) merely disguises their true motive, which is aggression.

Corinth sees the matter as a purely private quarrel between a mother-city and her colony, but Athens concludes a defensive alliance with Corcyra. Although this arrangement makes her technically not the aggressor in a possible war, her behaviour could be considered provocative.[3] Thucydides' explanation for Athens' decision is that war between Athens and Sparta was felt to be inevitable [i.44.2], and Athens did not want the Corcyrean fleet in Peloponnesian hands. He also links this incident to Athenian interests in the west by adding that Corcyra

lay conveniently on the route to Italy and Sicily. Both these points were made by the Corcyreans in their speech. Although Corinth used ἀσφάλεια to emphasise the idea that Athens should not become involved, the Athenian interpretation of security means the expansion of the empire at the risk of war, through their decision to form an alliance with Corcyra and through their ambitions in the west.

In the second incident described by Thucydides as one of the causes of the war, the Corinthians, in a speech to the Spartans [i.68-71], mention the idea of security against failure as an essential element in Spartan policy, and contrast it through antithesis with σφάλλειν/εσθαι with the failure of Persia and the possible failures of Athens. This cautious behaviour of Sparta can be called a wise policy, σωφροσύνη [1.68.1], but it can also lead to lack of knowledge of others' motives, ἀμαθία. The Spartans have had a reputation for being reliable, i.e not allowing an ally to fail [1.69.5], while relying on the threat of action more than on action itself. The Corinthians have begun to doubt whether this reputation is deserved, as Sparta is as slow to act against Athens as she was against Persia. This inaction has already caused the destruction of some states that relied on Sparta as their security against failure. Spartan policy was influenced by her fear of a Helot uprising at home, as at Ithome, and of the possible loss of a Spartiate force.[4] Also, the nature of the Peloponnesian League seems to have been such that action had to be ratified by other members, a process which took time. Athenian decisions appear, in Thucydides' account, to have been taken unilaterally.[5] Thucydides has, in the speeches given by on both occasions by the Corinthians, outlined the character of the protagonists through their interpretation of security and σωφροσύνη.

King Archidamus, whom Thucydides describes as ξυνετὸς δοκῶν ... καὶ

ὤφρων [1.79.2] is the embodiment of Spartan caution, especially that of the older generation. In his speech to the Spartan assembly he stresses the importance of security against making mistakes. War is risky, i.e. not without its losses [1.80.1]. He adds that those who have experienced war are not enthusiastic to go through it again, as many Spartans seems to be at present. War with Athens needs careful consideration [σωφρόνως], as it will be no small affair. Sparta should not rely on the possibility of enemy errors but make her own plans beforehand in security - ἀσφαλῶς προνουμένων [1.84.4]. For Archidamus security is not to be found in decisions taken under the influence of emotion but in careful forethought [1.84.4].

The speech of the Athenians [1.73-78] clearly reveals their character through their attitude to their empire. They stress the elements of advantage (ὠφελία) and power (δύναμις) in ruling an empire. Through the paranomasia of ὠφελία and ἀσφαλὲς, the Athenians emphasise that it is not to their advantage to let their empire go, in fact, it is not safe to do so, as the risks involved are too great [1.75.4] - κινδυνεύειν and μεγίστων πέρι κίνδυνων. The Athenians add that considerations of advantage in exercising power apply to Spartan control in the Peloponnese, too. They use their leadership for their own advantage within the Peloponnesian League. Had Sparta formed an empire after the Persian War, she would have behaved in exactly the same way as Athens in administering it [1.76.1]. This speech provides an analysis of the meaning of power for both sides, and shows that, to Athens, they are governed by the same motive in the exercise of that power. Security for both is governed by self-interest.

Although Thucydides emphasises the Spartans' caution as

characteristic of them, at least for the older generation. It does not seem to be the whole picture. The pro-war party at Sparta is represented in the speech of Sthenelaidas, the ephor, for whom the sensible policy - ἤν σωφρονῶμεν [1.86.2] is an immediate declaration of war against Athens. This is a very different outlook from the one that Thucydides ascribes to Archidamus and the one suggested in the Corinthians' speech. It is Sthenelaidas who finally rouses the Spartan assembly to war [1.87.5]. The speech is an appeal to Spartan honour [1.86.5] and a demand for punishment for Athenian aggression. Sthenelaidas shows that Spartans, too, do not always behave with the caution and regard for security that Archidamus recommends and of which Thucydides seems to approve through his praise of the Spartan king.

In their final speech at the Spartan congress [1.120.5], the Corinthians talk of security, ἀσφάλεια, as being the state which people enjoy when deciding on war. When they are at war, the presence of the emotion of fear can ruin earlier decisions made in safety. In a speech that is prophetic of the attitudes of both sides in the course of the war they say that sensible men (ἀνδρῶν σωφρόνων) are ready to come to terms when necessary and will not become over-confident through success, nor too cautious through wanting peace.

In book i Thucydides states his assessment of the reasons for the outbreak of war, as well as his explanation of the respective characters of the Athenians and Spartans. The differences can be seen through a consideration of their contrasting attitudes to security against loss or failure. Sparta seems to use ἀσφάλεια as a reason for inaction, while Athens uses it as reason for continual action, expansion and aggression. Neither, Thucydides implies through his approval of Archidamus, is the best policy: this should be achieved by a combination

of caution and a firm approach, as proposed by Archidamus [i.82.1].

Archidamus again represents the cautious side of the Spartan character in his speech to the Spartan troops before the invasion of Attica [ii.11]. This attitude is underlined by the fact that he sends a messenger to Athens to see whether the Athenians are ready to make terms. The messenger was not received by the Athenians because of a resolution of Pericles to receive no embassy from the Spartans once they had left their own territory [ii.12]. Archidamus mentions security against failure, ἀσφάλεια, three times in this speech. It is, therefore, of some concern to him. He thinks it safe enough that the Athenians will not come out to meet the Spartan force, but the Spartans should still be careful about security [ii.11.3]. One should be confident but take precautions to ensure safety [11.5], and the safest thing of all is a reliable and disciplined force [11.9]. All these statements reinforce the idea of the typical, older Spartan as cautious, careful and well-trained as against the younger, more emotional element such as Sthenelaidas, who are eager for war,

In the Funeral speech [ii.43 and 44] Pericles praises those who have died for their city and says that those who are left must pray for a life more secure against loss, ἀσφαλεστέραν, and think nothing too intolerable to be attempted against the enemy. This security is contrasted through paronomasia with ἀτολμετέραν which often means "more cowardly' or 'lacking in daring'. Τόλμα is characteristic of Athenians, [i.70.3] and is also associated with the Sicilian expedition. The use of the term ἀτολμετέραν in a context which seems to mean that the Athenians should not lose their spirit of daring through fear of death in the war, may, perhaps, be an appeal by Pericles for moderation

of Athenian daring, as also made in an earlier speech [i.144.1].

Pericles encourages those Athenian parents who have lost sons in the war to have more children, if they can, to increase the security of the state (as well as to replace the others in their memories) [ii.44.3]. Later, in the speech that Pericles makes after the outbreak of the plague, he discusses the problems of empire in more detail [ii.60-64]. He agrees that it is a tyranny, but he argues that it cannot be given up. In fact it would be risky, ἐπικίνδυνον, to do so [ii.63.2]. Those citizens who want to abandon the control of the empire are useless to Athens and would safely be slaves in a state ruled by someone else [ii.63.3]. Security against loss for Athens, then, lies in the maintenance of and belief in her empire, regardless of risk.

In his summary of Pericles [ii.65], Thucydides states that, under Pericles, Athens was safely guarded, ἀσφαλῶς διεφύλαξεν, i.e. that there was no major setback in Pericles' time.[6] Athens' coming failures through the ambition and greed of Pericles' successors are emphasised through repetition of σφάλλειν/εσθαι, while the antithesis with ἀσφαλῶς marks Pericles' control of Athens as safer. Ἀσφάλεια may also, like σφάλλειν, be used in foreshadowing Athens' failure both in the Sicilian expedition and in the whole war. Pericles, through caution and foresight, ensured Athens' survival. The words of this summary recall those that Archidamus uses in his speech to the Spartan assembly [i.84.4]. Pericles' forethought is emphasised by προγνούς ... πρόνοια and προέγνω and his control of Athens was without loss, ασφαλως. Archidamus suggested that Spartan security would be better ensured by careful forethought, ἀσφαλῶς προνουμένων. By the contrast between Archidamus' policy and that followed by the Spartans together with the contrast between Pericles' policies and those of his successors, both of

which Thucydides links through the similarity of their vocabulary, Thucydides is showing how the the caution of the older generation no longer applies.

When the ambassadors from Mytilene address the Spartan assembly [iii.10 -14], they try to justify their revolt from Athens as motivated by fear of Athens' continued growth. Since Mytilene was one of the stronger allies in the Athenian empire, she had not been reduced by Athens before, but now her strength and independence are felt to be a threat to the Athenians. Fear is stressed as a strong motive on both sides. The Athenians fear Mytilene in war, because she might change sides; the Mytileneans fear Athens in peacetime, as they might be absorbed into her empire as subjects rather than be treated as allies. The Mytileneans claim it was only a matter of time before one side or the other felt secure enough against failure to break the alliance [iii.12.1]. Now, through fear that the Athenians have been told their plans, the Mytileneans are looking for security elsewhere (in this case to Sparta, to whom they had made a previous unsuccessful appeal [iii.13.1]). Mytilene looks to Sparta as a liberator [iii.13.7], since this was Sparta's ostensible reason for entering the war [i.124.3, ii.8.4]. As it turned out, Spartan help was useless, since the force, sent as a result of this appeal, never arrived [iii.29]. In this account the Mytileans' interpretation of ἀσφάλεια is influenced by their fear, and they are shown to have made a mistake. Mytilene underestimated the speed of the Athenian reaction. Such underestimation of Athens is a common explanation in the *History* for Peloponnesian and allied errors, e.g. after Delium, Amphipolis and Sicily. The Spartan relief force wasted time and, far from acting as liberator, slaughtered non-Athenian

prisoners and eventually returned with no successes to the Peloponnese [iii.29 - 33]. As the Corinthians had pointed out [i.69.5], many had been ruined through relying on security from Sparta.

In his speech describing how the prosperity of the Mytileneans had caused them to think too well of themselves, Cleon concludes that unexpected success makes a state arrogant. There is greater security against loss, if an average amount of success is enjoyed rather than too much [iii.39.4]. Although this is a general statement, it could be taken in a broader context to refer to Athens. It is the Athenians who are later reminded that success should be used carefully [iv.18], who do not seem to do so and aim for more [iv.21.2, 41.3, 92.2], and who fail at Delium [iv.15], at Amphipolis [iv.14] and at Syracuse [ii.65]. It is ironic that this definition of ἀσφάλεια is made by Cleon, as he is the one who ensures that Athens does not make peace after the Athenians' sudden success at Pylos. For Cleon σωφροσύνη is a lack of learning, ἀμαθία, since learning makes men too clever and difficult to deal with. The Corinthians warned Sparta about such σωφροσύνη causing their ignorance, ἀμαθία, about matters outside Sparta [i.68.1].

For the Plateans security against failure consists of speaking their minds in front of the Spartans [iii.53.3], since they have no other hope left. Κινδυνεύειν is again closely associated with ἀσφάλεια to emphasise the risk involved to Plataea - starvation through siege or surrender to Sparta. In the past Plataea ignored her own safety for that of Greece [iii.56]. Perhaps it may be implied that such actions no longer ensure future security. This was earlier suggested in the contrast between the older generation's interpretation of ἀσφάλεια, exemplified by Archidamus and Pericles, and the later association of it with self-interest and ambition. Neither statement

does the Plataeans any good at this point. In their present situation they have to speak in their defence and claim that the wise course, σώφρονα ... χάριν, is to spare them [iii.58.1]. But Sparta only considers expediency, and Thebes is only too ready for revenge, while Athens, Plataea's ally, does nothing.

The revolution at Corcyra [iii.82-85] is used as a paradigm by Thucydides of the violent changes brought to many Greek states by the stress of war. A new vocabulary is needed to suit the new situations, and, as a result, words begin to change their accustomed meanings, as human responses change. Forethought, προμηθής, is interpreted as cowardice and wise moderation, σῶφρον, as weakness. Treachery and deception are now considered greater security against failure than honesty, and plotting in secret is acceptable behaviour [iii.82.7]. The incidents at Mytilene and Plataea show how, in Thucydides' opinion, war has affected both Athens and Sparta. Sparta ignores the Plataean appeal to the κοινὰ νόμιμα of Greece and, through expediency, hands the Plataeans over to Thebes. This action makes a clear contrast with her alleged role as liberator. Expediency and greed are also seen to be the common motives ruling Athenian political life after the death of Pericles [ii.65]. For Athens security against failure means the preservation of power, whatever the cost.

The Spartans advise the Athenians to use their advantage, gained at Pylos, securely (so that they incur no loss themselves) [iv.18.4]. Perhaps Thucydides is foreshadowing, through the antithesis of ἀσφάλεια and σφάλλειν/ῆσθαι in this passage, the coming losses by Athens at Delium and Amphipolis (both of which are called σφάλμα [v.14.2]), the loss in Sicily (σφάλλειν ii.65.12) and in the war itself

(σφάλλειν ii.65.12). Sparta stresses caution, avoidance of over-confidence and a proper respect for the element of chance in all affairs as characteristic of the wise [σωφρόνων ... ἀνδρῶν], and all of these have been mentioned as necessary by Archidamus or Pericles. Although their warning is aimed specifically at Athens, it has a general application. Sparta later became too confident after the Sicilian disaster, as did Athens' allies, and underestimated Athens' capacity to recover.

The reaction at Athens over news of Delium and Amphipolis is one of great alarm [iv.108.1]. The reaction of the allies of Athens is one of confidence which encourages them to leave the alliance and go over to Sparta [iv.108.3]. The allies, in Thucydides' opinion, are indulging more in wishful thinking than realistic calculations of security, ἀσαφεῖ ἢ πρόνοια ἀσφαλεῖ [iv.108.4], a point that is emphasised by paranomasia. Once more, forethought and considerations of security are stressed by the use of πρόνοια and ἀσφάλεια in close association. This time, however, it is the Peloponnesian allies who are not sufficiently careful. The Peloponnesians make major errors through emotional reactions, just as Athenians do, e.g. through greed for more after Pylos [iv.21.2] and through ambition and over-confidence about the expedition to Sicily [vi.24].

The meaning of security, ἀσφάλεια, to Athens is seen in the Melian dialogue [v.85,97,98,107 and 111]. The Athenian speakers were not asked to speak to the people of Melos but only to the Melian leaders. The Athenians take this as meaning that the oligarchs do not want to risk their safety, if the people support the Athenians' arguments [v.85]. Athens talks of the conquest of Melos as increasing both the size and security of the Athenian empire [v.97]. This is an Athenian

argument heard before: greater security results from greater power [i.76]. The Melians counter this argument with the suggestion that the Athenian interpretation of security will increase the hatred of others towards Athens [v.98]. Fear as the basis of empire is also also a familiar argument used before by Athens [i.76.2 and ii.64.5] and others, too, [iii.12]. This fear of increased Athenian power, which in turn was based on Athenian fears for her own security, led in Thucydides' view directly to Sparta's declaration of war [i.118].

The Athenians claim that the consideration of security against failure for Sparta will be dictated by self-interest [v.107]. Justice and honour mean danger, and Sparta does not willingly risk danger. Here, κίνδυνος and τόλμα, which suggest risk-taking and daring and are usually linked to Athens, are used in a negative context of Sparta. In this way the contrast and similarity between the Athenian and Spartan characters is revealed. The Athenians are daring and ready to take risks [i.70.3] through self-interest. Sparta will consider her own interests too, but will behave in the opposite way, i.e. she will not risk helping Melos. The only choice left for Melos is between war and security from disaster, which means capitulation to Athens as the wiser course, σωφρονέστερον, [v.111.4]. Like other states that the Corinthians noted had relied on Spartan aid [i.69], the Melians are destroyed.

The dialogue illustrates the Athenian character immediately before the Sicilian expedition, in which Athens, in Thucydides' account, experienced a major disaster, a πανωλεθρία.

Books vi and vii describe the Athenian expedition to Sicily and the references made to security are to the security of Athens. Alcibiades

[vi.18.5] in a confident speech in support of the expedition, claims that the fleet is security against loss for Athens, and, through it, Athens has freedom of movement to and from Sicily. The connection of loss to ἀσφάλεια may foreshadow the losses of the Athenians at Syracuse, for which σφάλλειν is used. Alcibiades also says that the Athenians can find their greatest security in their character and customs [vi.18.7] - a contradiction of Pericles' interpretation of Athenian character, which is approved by Thucydides [ii.65]. Pericles had understood the Athenian character [ii.44] and recognised the dangers of inactivity for the Athenians [ii.62.3]. He regarded their dislike of inactivity as a weakness, but Alcibiades makes this weakness seem strength. Although Alcibiades' opinions contrast with those Thucydides ascribes to Pericles, who represents the policy of caution and wisdom [ii.65], they were not completely wrong: a strong navy was of paramount importance to Athens in the control of her empire, while the restlessness and daring of the Athenians was responsible for the acquisition and maintenance of that empire. In Thucydides' interpretation, however, the restless Athenian character could only be successful when controlled by a leader like Pericles. Despite the loss of Pericles Athens seemed to have recovered very quickly after major setbacks i.e. after Delium and Sicily. Thucydides, however, presents this recovery as being assisted by repeated under-estimation of Athens by her opponents.

Nicias interprets security against failure as the possession of as large a force as possible to ensure victory in Sicily [vi.23.3 and 24.1]. By exaggerating the size of the force, he tried to put the Athenians off the expedition altogether or, at least, to secure the expedition against major loss. The antithesis between ἀσφάλεια and

in σφάλλειν/εσθαι [vi.23.2 and 24.3] once again foreshadows the coming loss in Sicily. Although Nicias is represented as a cautious leader [v.16.1], he sometimes takes considerable risks. Here, in trying to dampen enthusiasm at Athens for the expedition and, perhaps, get the Athenians to give it up, he finds that he has only made it worse for himself. The Athenians, in the enthusiasm which makes them consider the expedition a secure thing, οὐδὲν ἂν σφαλεῖσαν μεγάλην δύναμιν [24.2], vote for the larger force he recommends to ensure success. Nicias had made a similar mistake when challenging Cleon to go to Pylos himself [iv.28.1]. Ἀσφάλεια, through Nicias and through the Athenian reaction to the thoughts of Sicilian conquest, is again linked neatly with ambition and rashness. The use of the adverb ασφαλως to describe the precautions that Nicias takes to be as secure against disaster as he can, recalls and contrasts with its use about Pericles' guardianship of Athens [ii.65.5] and Archidamus' advice to the Spartans to behave with caution and regard for their own security [i.84.4]. Nicias is concerned about security and caution but his assessment of it is wrong. This time the use of ἀσφάλεια highlights the risk the Athenians are taking through their own and through their leaders' rashness and extravagance.

The speech of Hermocrates at Syracuse is made in order to rally the Sicilians and make them unite against the invading Athenian force. The best steps to take to secure oneself against loss, it is suggested, are those taken through fear [vi.34.9] (contrast the Corinthian view at i.120.5). The risk implied in the loss is once more underlined by the use of κίνδυνος, and the link between considerations of security and the atmosphere of emotion made by the speaker in his appeal to the fear of an immediate Athenian invasion [vi.34.5].

In the debate at Camarina Hermocrates reiterates that security against loss for Sicily lies in unity [vi.78.1 and 2]. The Sicilians cannot act through self-interest for the preservation of their own cities at the expense of others, or through hatred of Syracuse. This would not be a wise policy, σωφρονισθῶμεν, [vi.78.2]. The people of Rhegium had shown what the policy of wisdom should be [vi.79.2]. Forethought, προμηθία and neutrality may ensure safety, ἀσφάλεια, but they are not the correct policy for these circumstances [vi.80.1]. Hermocrates' appeal for Sicilian unity makes a marked and ironic contrast to the picture of disunity because of ambition that Thucydides gives of the Athenians [ii.65.11], and the feelings of fear and hatred which cause Athens' subjects to rebel.

The Athenians' speech in the debate is another justification of their empire. They claim that they have come to Sicily through concern for their own security [vi.83.2], a concern which they are sure the Camarineans share because of their similar fear of Syracusan power. They refer to their fear for their security again [vi.83.4], and offer the Camarineans the security against failure of an alliance with Athens [vi.87.5]. Through the Camarineans' use of ἀσφάλεια in this speech Thucydides is stressing Athenian ambition in Sicily and, perhaps, through its meaning of 'absence of failure', ironically reminding the reader of their failure.

When Alcibiades defects to Sparta, he makes a speech to justify his action and encourage Spartan confidence in him [vi.89-92]. His choice of words in this speech reflects his knowledge of the Spartan character, since he makes use of ἀσφάλεια or its variants three times. It is a calculated appeal to Spartan self-interest and caution, no less in what it says than the way in which it is said. Alcibiades claims that

democracy is an absurd system, but to change such a system in wartime would not bring greater security [vi.89.6]. Athens is no longer the city which Alcibiades admires, and in which he enjoyed his citizen rights in security [vi.92.4]. Finally he asserts that, after destroying Athens, Sparta will lead Greece securely, ἀσφαλῶς [vi.92.5]. The use of the adverb ἀσφαλῶς recalls its use and interpretation by Archidamus, by Thucydides about Pericles, by Nicias and by the Spartan at the time of Pylos. The concept of security against loss contained in ασφαλεια has changed from a concern for the well-being of the state to an appeal to ambition, aggression and self-interest. The appeal in this instance comes in the form of an idealised picture of empire, not the reality of power that Thucydides has the Athenians recognise from the start [i.73-78]. Alcibiades' speech is made by Thucydides the turning-point in Spartan hesitation over fortifying Decelea [vi.93], but Thucydides himself records that Sparta had implemented a policy of building fortifications in Attica as early as 422/1 [v.17.2]. His record of events appears to conflict here with his presentation of the reason for their occurrence.

Sparta is led by feelings of confidence [ἐθάρσει viii.2.3, εὐέλπιδες viii.2.4 and ἄπτεσθαι viii.2.4] to hope for the leadership of Greece in security - ἀσφαλῶς ἡγήσεσθαι [viii.2.4]. These words recall exactly those of Alcibiades, when he promised Sparta the safe leadership of Greece, ἀσφαλῶς ἡγηθῆτε, with the goodwill of all. This confidence ends in error, as forecast by the Athenians [i.77.6], just as the Athenian over-confidence about Sicily is seen to end in disaster in book vi. Sparta, her allies, and former Athenian allies over-estimate the effect of the Sicilian disaster on Athens, and

they under-estimate her capability to recover. Even the normally cautious Chians join in the revolt against Athens, to their cost [viii.24]. The description of feelings among the former allies includes such terms as ξυνκινδυνεύσειν and ἐτόλμησαν, which Thucydides has previously associated with Athenian risk-taking and daring [i.70.3]. This mistaken assessment of Athens is described by the word ἐσφάλησαν, which contrasts with the feelings of security through which they began their revolts. Others, including the Corinthians, when asked by the Lesbians to help in a planned revolt, remember the failure of the previous rebellion of Mytilene as a σφάλμα [viii.32]. On that occasion the Mytileneans miscalculated the speed and severity of the Athenian response [iii.4.2]. In their speech to the Spartans the Mytileneans also refer to failure and use a variant of σφάλλειν/εσθαι [iii.14.1]. The techniques of recall and echo are skilfully used by Thucydides to emphasise failure and the delusion of freedom from failure of the Peloponnesians.

Thucydides' picture of the different characters of the Athenians and the Spartans can be clearly seen through the interpetation of security, ἀσφάλεια, that each is given. He also shows their similarity to each other and to other states, as they all experience failure, whatever their attempts at security against it. In addition there is the suggestion that the different generations have modified the meaning of ἀσφάλεια. For the older generation, as exemplified by Pericles and Archidamus, security is gained by caution but such caution is criticised, e.g. by the Corinthians on Spartan behaviour [i.71], and by Thucydides on the contrast between Periclean policies and those of his successors [ii.65]. Such a change of meaning exemplifies Thucydides' comment in his account of the stasis at Corcyra, which he uses as a

paradigm for revolutions in the Greek world [iii.82-5]: words changed their meanings to suit new situations. Emotionalism, greed, aggression and treachery were considered the new way to ensure security. The terms that Thucydides had previously associated with ἀσφάλεια, i.e. τὸ σῶφρον, προμηθής and τὸ ξυνετόν, also receive new definitions to agree with the new interpretations.

Thucydides, then, indicates that for Athens after Pericles' death security against failure was held to be in continued, confident aggression to increase the size of the empire. For older-generation Sparta and for Plataea [iii.56] such security lay in their traditional cautious approach to risk, an approach rejected by Sthenelaidas [i.86] and redefined by Alcibiades to incite the Spartans to action against Athens [vi.90-93]. For both Athens and Sparta Thucydides shows that emotion, i.e. over-confidence, can lead to major mistakes. Through such confidence the Athenians over-estimate themselves, while the Peloponnesians under-estimate the Athenians. Although their interpretations of security differ, they both suffer through a misinterpretation of it. Thucydides also tries to show how these errors of judgement occur and will occur again under similar circumstances [i.22.4]. By his constant repetition and antithesis of σφάλλειν/εσθαι and ἀσφάλεια, Thucydides is emphasising that failure is an inevitable part of human experience. Its effects can be mitigated by forethought and moderation, πρόνοια and σωφροσύνη. Whatever the precautions taken, complete security against failure can never be assured. Perhaps Thucydides' own view may be that which he attributes to the Spartans when they offer peace terms to Athens after Pylos [iv.18]. The wise (σωφρόνων ... ἀνδρῶν) know that fortune can change at any

time. One should use a position of advantage carefully, ἀσφαλῶς, and remember chance and the possibility of failure.

CHAPTER FIVE

ὙΒΡΙΣ

Ὕβρις is generally used in Greek literature of violent and aggressive behaviour that may lead to suffering and a reversal of fortune; it is found with this meaning as early as the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Ὕβρις usually leads to eventual punishment, normally of the doer or of those associated with him. The ὕβρις of the suitors in the *Odyssey* (xvii. 588, xviii. 381) is eventually punished by Odysseus, who kills them on his return to Ithaca. A further development of the idea of ὕβρις involving punishment may be seen in Hesiod (*Op.* 213-24), where he warns that justice (δίκη) will always follow ὕβρις.[1]

Attic tragic drama highlights the connection and tension between glory and failure, suffering and happiness. This tension involves a reversal of fortune, one that emphasizes the short-lived nature of glory or happiness and the inevitability of its end. The *Persae* of Aeschylus illustrates the tragedy of the fall of a great power and contrasts its might with its subsequent sufferings in the war in Greece. This fall was swift retribution for Persian aggression [739-52 and 821-6]. In *Oedipus Tyrannus* Sophocles shows how Oedipus falls from being the highest [40,46] to the lowest [1204,1297]. The idea of a close temporal relationship between high point and low point can also be traced to Homer. The greatest achievments of some of the Homeric heroes culminate in their deaths, e.g. *Iliad*, xvi. 844-54, where the dying Patroclus after his moment of *aristeia* forecasts the victorious Hector's death to him. This kind of contrast and connection between success and failure, life and death, suffering and happiness is, then, a commonplace in Greek

literature and thought; it must have been as well known to Thucydides' audience as the idea that arrogance and violence as a result of success also brought swift retribution in the form of suffering and failure.

The idea that events occur so as to cause a reversal of fortune is one that seems central to Thucydides' interpretation of history; but in his work there is no mention of the punishment of ὕβρις by an outside force or agency. Pericles' Funeral speech shows Athens at the height of her power [ii.34-46]. Through his use of juxtaposition between this speech and the account of the plague, which immediately follows it [ii.47-55], Thucydides suggests that he is well aware of the dramatic and tragic effects to be gained from such a contrast.[2] In a later speech Thucydides has Pericles again refer to Athenian power as the greatest, δύναμιν μεγίστην and πόλιν μεγίστην [ii.64]. For Thucydides Athenian morals deteriorated through the effects of the plague and the loss of Pericles [ii.65]: Athenian affairs were then controlled by those who ruined Athens by their ambition, men such as Cleon, who persuaded the Athenians not to make peace after their unexpected success at Pylos. The Melian dialogue, which is placed immediately before the account of the Sicilian expedition,[3] shows both Athenian power and her ruthlessness in exercising it. Thus, it seems placed to contrast clearly with her utter failure in Sicily. Thucydides' use of juxtaposition and highlighting seems to suggest, at least for books i to vii, that he may have thought them linked by cause and effect, or that he may have wished to bring out dramatic contrast between them. The lapse of time between events juxtaposed in this way is often glossed over in such phrases as 'at the beginning of the following summer' and 'in the same winter'. These lead the reader to make quick assumptions

about the temporal and causal connections between the events described, and see them as perhaps more closely linked than they might have been thought in reality. In addition, any mention of ὕβρις in connection with such events would, surely, lead to associations of thought in the reader, who would then conclude that suitable punishment for such ὕβρις could not be far away.

When he refers to ὕβρις Thucydides uses the noun ὕβρις and the verbs ὑβρίζεσθαι and ἐξυβρίζεσθαι. They are frequently found in association with words such as ὀργή, ἐξουσία, ἔρως, πλεονεξία and with words referring to the behaviour itself, e.g. βιαζέσθαι and the metaphor associated with ὄρεγω, the latter of which is found especially in book iv in reference to Athens [iv.21.2, 41.3, 92.2]. Ὕβρις, then, occurs in the context of violent and aggressive behaviour. In the last book of the *History*, however, ὕβρις seems to be treated differently and it is as though Thucydides is working here with a new approach to some different ideas.[4]

Ὕβρις is first mentioned in the Corinthians' speech of complaint to the Athenians about the arrogance, aggression and disrespect for convention shown by her colony, Corcyra [i.38]. The strength of the Corinthian reaction to the Corcyrean appeal is shown by the fact that the Corinthians refer twice to Corcyrean ὕβρις [i.38.2 and 5]. They associate ὕβρις with Corcyra's ambition, aggression and violence through words such as ἐξουσία πλούτου [i.38.5], βιάσασθαι, κρατῶσι βιάζωνται [i.37.4], and βίαιοι καὶ πλεονέκται [i.40.1]. Athens concluded a defensive alliance with Corcyra. The reasons Thucydides gives are those used by the Corcyreans to persuade Athens to ally with them: the inevitability of war with the Peloponnesians and the advantage of such an alliance to Athenian ambitions in the west [i.36 and 44].

In their speech to the Spartans [i.68.2] about the Athenian siege of Potidaea, a Corinthian colony that also paid a tribute to Athens, the Corinthians accuse Athens of ὕβρις; this is the first direct linking of Athens with ὕβρις in Thucydides. Contrasting the Spartan and Athenian characters they claim that the Athenians are constantly active and aggressive [i.70.9]. Corinth acts through enmity against Athens [i.56.2] over Corcyra [i.56.1]; the Corinthians claim there was violence on Athens' part, βίᾳ [i.68.4], so that ὕβρις is once more being used of arrogant and violent behaviour.

Archidamus defends the Spartan character and justifies the traditional Spartan approach of caution and moderation. He claims that, because of this caution, the Spartans are the only people who do not become hubristic when successful, εὐπραγίαις ... οὐκ ἐξυβρίζομεν [i.84.2]. Ὕβρις is here linked to hasty action, which Archidamus criticizes as being not well thought out; a contrast may be implied with the Athenians. Athenian behaviour has also been called ὕβρις by the Corinthians in their earlier speech to the same assembly.

Thucydides states that only Pericles could check Athenian ὕβρις [ii.65.9]. Here, for the first time in the *History* Thucydides himself refers to ὕβρις as characteristic of the Athenians. Previously, it was a charge levelled against Athens by her opponents. Thucydides here implies that, without Pericles, Athens would give way to her ὕβρις and, ultimately, be punished. This is exactly what happens, according to Thucydides' account of the period of the demagogues' control of Athenian policy [ii.65.7]; this domination leads to failure first in Sicily, and then in the whole war [ii.65.12]. In this instance, too, ὕβρις is linked to words of emotion such as ὀργή, which is used

three times in this chapter, and θρασέω.

Thucydides also stresses the ambition of Pericles' successors for power and wealth [ii.65.7]; this ambition led to division in the polis, ὀρεγόμενοι τοῦ πρῶτος ἕκαστος...τὴν πόλιν..ἐταράχθησαν.

The link between arrogant, ambitious and violent behaviour as the result of success is made by Cleon in the debate on Mytilene. He claims that success, εὐδαιμονία, and good times have led the Mytileneans to be too confident, θρασεῖς and to take advantage of their position to revolt from Athens [iii.39.4 and 5]. This reference, εὐπραγία ἦλθη, ἐς ὕβριν τρέπειν, reminds the reader of the use of the same words by Archidamus [i.84.2]. Cleon is referring specifically to the Mytileneans' intention to use force in the revolt against Athens, βιαίον τι, [iii.39.2], but the statement also is a general one and refers to human behaviour. It seems ironic that Cleon, who is one of the demagogues who, Thucydides claims, fostered Athenian ὕβρις, should be the one to accuse the Mytileneans of the same thing. He then says that it is safer to enjoy a little success than too much [39.4]. Again it seems ironic that Cleon should say this, especially when he is the one who encourages the Athenians to take advantage of their unexpected success at Pylos and refuse the Spartan offer of peace. Cleon also has the reputation of being violent in character [iii.36.6].[8]

In his reply Diodotus suggests that a more lenient treatment of Mytilene than that proposed by Cleon would be expedient for Athens. In arguing against the death penalty for the rebels he says that passion of one kind or another will always control men's behaviour. These passions can be roused through experiencing extreme poverty or through ὕβρις, which is the result of a prosperity that brings the desire for still more wealth [iii.45.4]. Here ὕβρις is again closely linked in an

Athenian context to ἐξουσία, πλεονεξία, ὀργή, ἐλπίς, ἐρώς and τόλμα, since the reference, although in the form of a general statement, is obviously meant by the speaker to be a warning to Athens about her behaviour.

The ὕβρις of those previously in control is given as one of the reasons for the savage revenge taken by the revolutionaries in Corcyra [iii.84.1].[6] In this portion of Book iii Thucydides describes the breakdown of law and order in Corcyra as an example of what was to happen in many other states in Greece because of the stress of war [82.1]. Ὀργή brings out the worst aspects of human nature. The lesson seems to be that what happened at Corcyra can happen again, because human nature has not changed,[7] and, of course, it does happen to Athens later in the war. Corcyra is the first state in the *History* to be charged with ὕβρις; she is also the first to suffer the full effects of civil war, effects that might be seen as the retribution for her ὕβρις. Thucydides is perhaps preparing the reader for the idea that Athens, whose ὕβρις has been already mentioned, will suffer much the same misfortunes.

The Spartans' speech at Athens about Pylos [iv.17-20] is a model of moderation and caution. They advocate the careful use of advantage and suggest that the unlooked-for element of chance even in success, εὐπραγίαις, should always be remembered. They are not asking for peace because of a loss of power on their part, i.e. from a position of weakness, or from the ὕβρις which results from the acquisition of too much power [iv.18.2]. Like Archidamus in his reference to ὕβρις [i.84.2], the Spartans make a contrast by implication with the Athenian reaction to their success at Pylos. Thucydides, however, seems to feel

that Athens lost an opportunity to make peace.[8] He attributes Athens' refusal to come to terms with Sparta to the influence of Cleon and to Athens' ambition for still more, τοῦ δὲ πλέονος ὠρέγοντο [iv.21]. This ambition was mentioned by the Spartan speakers in very similar words, αἰεὶ γὰρ τοῦ πλέονος ἐλπίδι ὀρέγονται [iv.18.4], as was the ambition of Pericles' successors as Athenian leaders by Thucydides [ii.65]. The reader is meant to understand that such over-reaching and arrogance is exactly the condition of the Athenians.

The repetition of phrases suggesting Athenian greed [iv.17.4, 21.2, 41.3, and 92.2], is so marked in this book that the later failures at Delium and at Amphipolis seem to be a kind of punishment for Athenian ὕβρις. The use of the phrase, ἀρχῆς ἄλλης ὀρέγεσθαι, by Nicias of the planned Sicilian expedition [vi.10.5] recalls its use here in book iv, and thus may link one failure with another. Thucydides seems to be suggesting that, had the Athenians made peace after Pylos, they would have been much safer.[9] Their ὕβρις, the result of greed and ambition, involves them in defeat.

After their defeat by the Boeotians, some of the surviving Athenians took refuge with the garrison at Delium. They were accused by the Boeotians of desecrating the temples and of disregarding the common laws of the Greeks and were not permitted to take up their dead. The Athenians replied that they were acting through necessity in self-defence and were not guilty of religious ὕβρις. They were only following custom, νομός, in not giving up conquered territory [iv.98.8]. In any case they were only doing what the Boeotians themselves did when they drove out the original inhabitants of the area. If the Athenians are now guilty of ὕβρις in their treatment of the temples, then so were the Boeotians [iv.98.5].

The Athenians were charged, rightly or wrongly, with breaking the religious customs of the Greeks (τὰ νόμιμα - iv.97.2). The Boeotians, too, disregarded νομός in the case of the Athenian dead. As in the revolution at Corcyra [iii.82-5], Thucydides is showing how the old ways are re-interpreted under crisis and words seem to change their meanings [iii.82.4]. Although religious beliefs and explanations play little if any part in Thucydides' ideas of historical causation, he was certainly aware of the effect of such accusations of the desecration of religious sites and of lack of respect for custom by both sides.

There is a great dramatic contrast between the arguments of the Melian dialogue, on the one hand, and what they reveal about Athenian character and motives [v.85 - 113], and the following two books on the other, which describe in considerable detail the events leading up to the Athenian expedition to Sicily as well as the fate of that expedition.[3] The reasons for Athenian action against Melos are briefly reported [v.84], while the arguments on both sides are dramatically represented in the form of a debate. The Athenians argue that might is right and their statements show their confidence in their power. The Melians warn them that vengeance will come. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that, for Thucydides, this punishment was the Athenian loss in Sicily, which is described immediately following the Melian debate, as though a kind of cause and effect. For example, the Athenians tell the Melians that it is useless for them to trust in luck or hope [v.113]. Just before the final destruction of the Athenian force in Sicily Nicias encourages his men to look to hope and good luck [vii.77]. The Melian dialogue and the Sicilian expedition, then, seem

to suggest that this may be example of Athenian ὕβρις followed by punishment.[10]

The description of the profanation of the mysteries [vi.28.1] helps to underline what Hornblower has called 'the dark insinuations of the opening chapters of book vi'.[11] The religious profanation hardly augurs well for the expedition. Thucydides describes the incident in such a way as to bring out its full dramatic effect. The reader is rapidly led from the debate (spring 415) to the incident of the Hermae, its mention of ὕβρις and the intrigues against Alcibiades, to the sailing (midsummer of the same year), with no indication of any other event between them.[12]

In a similar way the digression on the story of Harmodius and Aristogeiton [vi.53-59] helps to illustrate the atmosphere of fear and suspicion at Athens that led to the recall of Alcibiades from Sicily.[13] The conspiracy of Harmodius and Aristogeiton originated, in Thucydides' account, through the impulses of love and pride (δι' ὀργῆς ὁ μὲν ἐρωτικὴς, ὁ δὲ ὑβρισμένος - vi.57.3). Ὕβρις is again mentioned in association with strong emotional impulses, which lead to violence, in this case to political assassination, again at Athens, and again in a passage which is being used partly, at least, to increase the dramatic effect of Thucydides' description of the atmosphere in the city [vi.60.1].

The tragic reversal of Athenian fortune is clearly demonstrated in book vii. One of the ways in which Thucydides prepares the reader for this is by his careful repetition of a such a word as ὕβρις, loaded as it is with epic and dramatic overtones. Although the reader is aware from ii.65 that Athens fails in Sicily, when the disaster comes, it seems to be from Thucydides' description of Athenian motives and

behaviour throughout the *History*, the result of her ambition, greed and ὕβρις.

The use of ὕβρις in book viii is different from that in the earlier books. There, it seems that Thucydides is building through repetition of such words as ὕβρις a picture of Athens' character, her confidence, arrogance and pride that will lead to her ultimate downfall. In book viii ὕβρις is mentioned in connection with the payment of Athenian sailors. Alcibiades persuaded Tissaphernes to tell the Peloponnesians that Athenian sailors were paid only a small amount to prevent their becoming too arrogant through having too much [viii.45.2]. Whatever the meaning of the reference to naval pay at the time,[14] this passage illustrates nothing especially noteworthy in the use of ὕβρις. The remaining two references are of ὑβρίζεσθαι used transitively. In this instance it means physical violence against a person and refers to the rumour, started by Chaereas, that the families of the Athenians at Samos were being abused by the Four Hundred [vi.74.3 and 86.3]. The use of ὕβρις in this book, then, shows that Thucydides seems not to be working with the same concepts in mind as he had in his consistent usage in books i to vi.

Thucydides' use of ὕβρις in books i to vi is very similar to that found in earlier literature. Ὕβρις there denoted arrogant and violent behaviour which is punished inevitably by some kind of retribution. In these six books Thucydides casts Athens as the protagonist in a kind of tragedy, one whose ὕβρις is justly punished by her failure in Sicily in book vii.[15] For Thucydides, however, unlike the tragic dramatist or Herodotus, this retribution does not come through a divine agent but through human nature. Success

breeds arrogance and an irrational expectation that success will continue. Such behaviour brings its own punishment through the response that it provokes from others, as at Corcyra during the revolution [iii.84]. Human nature is usually the agent that brings failure and punishment but Thucydides also allows for the unexpected, i.e. events that are beyond one's control. This is explained as the working of chance [e.g. i.141, iv.18], which the Athenians ignore, despite warnings. Through his artistry in pairing events to highlight the contrasts and reversals between them, e.g. the glory of Athens shown throughout the Funeral speech and Athenian despair during the plague [book ii], Athens' success at Pylos and her loss of Delium and Amphipolis [book iv], or Athenian power revealed in the Melian dialogue followed by her utter failure in Sicily [books v to vii], he further suggests that there was a link between these events, and that part of this link may have been Athenian ὕβρις that, each time, brought swift retribution on Athens. Every contrast thus suggested seems to form a link in Athens' inevitable progression to utter defeat (πανωλεθρία) in Sicily.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS

At the beginning of the *History* Thucydides states that he is writing an account of the events of the Peloponnesian War and a record of the past as an example for the future, since much the same things will happen again while human nature remains the same [1.22.4]. The words λαμπρότης, σφάλλειν/εσθαι, ἀσφάλεια and ὕβρις indicate that Thucydides is emphasizing his interpretation of events by the use, repetition and recall of these words and that this interpretation is a dramatic one.

λαμπρότης is associated with Athenian glory in particular. It is used of the magnificence of the Athenian expedition to Sicily assembled at Piraeus, and recalled in the description of its defeat at Syracuse. It seems in this way closely connected with the idea of a reversal of fortune. The immediate, visual glory implied in λαμπρότης fits Thucydides' picture of Athenian greatness but the contexts in which it occurs also suggest an end to that glory.

Σφάλλειν/εσθαι refers to a failure that is the result of one's own mistakes or of sheer misfortune. The frequent use of antithesis between σφάλλειν/εσθαι and ἀσφάλεια suggests that the concept of such failure and the precautions to be adopted against it are important in Thucydides' view of events. Athenian failure occurs through Athens' own mistakes, as did the Persian, mistakes that lead the state to misinterpret the meaning of security. Complete security for man, however, seems impossible, as there is always the element of chance to be remembered, as Archidamus [i.84], Pericles [ii.62], Hermocrates [iv.62, vi.78] and Nicias [vii.61] all warn. The incidence of

σφάλλειν/εσθαι increases as the Sicilian failure approaches. It is used of failure for others, too, e.g. Sparta, but the Spartans claim they can learn from their experiences. It is also used of failure that occurs despite precautions. This is attributed to the incalculable element in human affairs. Failure, then, is part of an historical process for Thucydides and something that cannot be completely avoided. Athens, however, brings failure upon herself most of the time. The use of σφάλλειν/εσθαι in the protases of conditional sentences to imply a failure that the audience knows will happen is also a common trope found in drama to emphasize the irony of a situation.

Ἀσφάλεια is another important concept for Thucydides, and one that is closely linked to σφάλλειν/εσθαι. Through its repetition he shows how mistaken both sides are in their idea of security. Ἀσφάλεια is often associated by Thucydides with words that imply good sense, caution and forethought, particularly that of the older generation and may thus be linked especially with Pericles for Athens, whose period of ascendancy is described as ἀσφαλῶς, and for Sparta with Archidamus, who emphasises the need for security [i. 79-85]. Nicias, too, is cautious, acknowledges the role of chance, and aims at security. He is, however, shown by Thucydides to be over-cautious and this seems to lead to his failure.

Ὕβρις is often used in drama of arrogant and violent behaviour which brings ἄτη, blindness to consequences, and ends in ruin. Thucydides links this word particularly to Athens and emphasises the Athenian greed and ambition that result in her hubristic behaviour. Such behaviour is not punished by the gods, as it is in drama or Herodotus. Success leads to a desire for more and to the irrational

expectation that such success can be repeated. This expectation and ambition for Thucydides is ὕβρις and it appears to be 'punished' by inevitable failure.

Thucydides' work, though incomplete, seems to fall into two main sections: books i to vii, the outbreak of war to the Sicilian disaster, and viii, the aftermath of Sicily to 411. Book viii is different in that there are no direct speeches or dramatic dialogues. As was indicated in the earlier chapters, Thucydides may also be dealing with new ideas and different ways of presenting events.[1] This change may also indicate that he later viewed the Sicilian expedition in a different light, that perhaps he originally expected no further action after Sicily, or that the story of Athens to this point may have best illustrated his ideas on the reversal of fortune as part of an historical process. The unfinished state of viii, however, makes it difficult to come to any firm conclusion about the direction of that or possible subsequent books.[2] As it stands, it does not appear to have the same unity of treatment as i to vii seem to possess.

These first seven books, as Macleod suggests 'are shaped in such a way as to prepare us for the disaster in Sicily'.[3] As has been argued throughout, Thucydides prepares us *inter alia* by carefully linking and repeating words so as to recall their previous use. It also enables him to add irony to his account of a situation.

There would seem to be for Thucydides a process of glory and fall, achievment and failure in history.[4] This process he illustrates most clearly in his account of what happens to Athens. The way in which her decline is described, shows that Thucydides also interprets these events as a peripateia or reversal of fortune. The tragic hero at the height of his power can be ruined through his own fault or through the

envy of the gods. Athens, too, seems to fall from such a position of greatness, one that is described in the early part of the *History*, to utter disaster in Sicily through ambition and greed.

Such similarity to tragic drama in Thucydides' work does not mean that he was writing a tragedy but it does suggest that he was influenced by a tragic mode of thought[5] in his interpretation of the truth (*τὸ σαφὲς* - 1.22.4) behind what happened. Thus his explanation of events sometimes clashes with the narrative and the facts do not always seem to fit neatly into his account of why things happened that way. For example, the reason he gives for the failure of the Sicilian expedition [ii.65] does not agree with his account of the reinforcements sent by Athens [vii.42].[6] Also, Athens' swift recovery from such defeats as that at Delium and in Sicily seem to be attributed to her restless ambition and to underestimation by her opponents, rather than to the strength of Athens' resources. Thucydides was, however, directly involved in the war as an Athenian and a strategos. Thus the *History* is not only a record of that war but the feelings, thoughts and interpretations of one who lived through a period of momentous change and decline in his city's status and power.

NOTES: CHAPTER ONE

1. W.R. Connor, *Thucydides*, (Princeton, 1984), 6.

2. F.M. Cornford, *Thucydides Mythistoricus*, (London, 1907), 129-152.

3. J. de Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, trans. P. Thody, (Oxford, 1973).

4. V. Hunter, *Thucydides, the Artful Reporter*, (Toronto, 1973).

NOTES: CHAPTER TWO

1. A similar conclusion is reached by J. M. Patwell in his dissertation, *Grammar, discourse and style in Thucydides Book VIII*, (Ann Arbor, 1978).

2. Liddell, Scott and Jones, *Greek-English Lexicon*, (Oxford, 1968) *s.v.h.*

3. P.Huart, *Le vocabulaire de l'analyse psychologique dans l'oeuvre de Thucydide*, (Paris, 1968). The compound ἀπολαμπρύνεσθαι is mentioned by A. W. Gomme, *Historical Commentary on Thucydides*, (Oxford, 1984), iv on book vi, 237. It is used by Herodotus [i.41,vi.70] to mean 'to distinguish oneself'. This use is quoted by the scholiast on Aristophanes *Pax* 450.

4. Gomme, *HCT* i, on book i, 431.

5. W. R. Connor, *Thucydides*, (Princeton, 1984), 74, note 52.

6. That this outward appearance is deceptive is suggested earlier by Thucydides in i.10.2. He compares the buildings of Sparta and Athens and concludes that an observer would think Athens twice as powerful as she really was from her appearance alone.

7. The plague as the effect of chance on Athens is suggested by such words as περιπεσόντες [ii.54.2]. Chance as an element in the Sicilian disaster is also referred to in δυστυχέστατον [vii.87.5]. For the plague as 'bad luck' for Athens see also P. Brunt, "Spartan Policy and Strategy in the Archidamean War",

Phoenix 19 (1965) 267 and 269-271. The expedition, then, was not a self-inflicted defeat but chance played a part. It is also clear from the narrative that the Athenians came close to success at least once in Sicily e.g. vi.103. This suggests that Thucydides' view of the expedition was a tragic one. A power, such as Athens, moves inevitably to disaster and the proximity of success merely serves to heighten the coming tragedy.

8. For a discussion of Thucydides' selective view of Pericles' policies and those of the demagogues, see S. Hornblower, *The Greek World 479-323 B.C.*, (London, 1983), 125-6.

9. Hornblower, *Greek World*, 130.

10. For a brief discussion on Thucydides' evaluation of Alcibiades, see Hornblower, *Greek World*, 142.

11. V. Hunter, *Past and Process in Herodotus and Thucydides*, (Toronto, 1982), 266.

12. Connor, *Thucydides*, 74.

NOTES: CHAPTER THREE

1. It is used frequently of failure in battle, e.g. 1.143, ii.87, iii.39, and of the failure of the state at ii.60 and ii.65.

2. Thucydides often refers to failure (*σφάλλειν/εσθαι*) of hopes or plans, e.g. iv.62, iv.18, and i.69.

3. Herodotus uses *νικάω* sixty-one times of conquest in battle, e.g. 1.74, 7.166, 3.59, eleven times of winning a competition, e.g. 1.144, 6.103, and twelve times of winning by persuasion, e.g. 3.82, 5.36 and 6.109. Thucydides uses *νικάω* approximately one hundred and nine times, in most cases of winning a victory, e.g. i.29.5, iv.95.2 and ii.6.3., but also of winning over by argument, e.g. ii.60.6, ii.87.3 and i.70.5.

4. *Ἁμαρτάνω* is found twenty-five times in Herodotus with three meanings: to miss, e.g. i.43, 3.35, 4.136, to fail to understand, e.g. 1.71, 4.164, 9.33 and to be mistaken, e.g. 5.91, 4.9. It is used approximately fifty-two times by Thucydides in both speech and narrative with similar meanings, e.g. i.33.3, iv.61.6 and 1.92.

5. Herodotus uses *πταίω* once at 9.101 of disaster for Greece at the hands of Mardonius. *Προσπταίω* is found twelve times, e.g. 3.40, 1.16 and 7.170.

6. The seven instances are 7.16, 7.142, 4.140, 7.52, 5.50, 7.50, 7.168. The compound *ἀποσφαλέντα* is found once at 6.5.

7. These contexts include the use of σφάλμα as well as σφάλλειν/εσθαι and are found at 7.16, 10, 50 and 7.168. Failure is linked to hasty action and to lack of caution by Artabanus in his warning to Xerxes to abandon his expedition to Greece. This link is similar to that which Thucydides seems to make between failure (σφάλλειν/εσθαι) and lack of proper caution in the case of Athens.

8. The fifty-three usages include one at iii.84.3. This chapter is often regarded as spurious, *v.* H. S. Jones and J. E. Powell, *Thucydidis Libri I - IV*, (Oxford, 1958).

9. The reading at ii.65.12. is given as either three, eight or ten years. The conclusion, however, remains the same - that Athens was not completely finished by the Sicilian Expedition, as might be concluded from the descriptions in Books vi and vii.

10. Thucydides' statement that Athens failed to provide τὰ πρόσφορα for the forces in Sicily does not seem consistent with his later narrative where reinforcements nearly as large as the original force are sent to Sicily [vii.42]. A.W.Gomme, *HCT*, 2.195-6, argues that this chapter was written at a later date because of inconsistencies between it and the narrative of books vi and vii.

11. These occur at i.70.7, i.140.1, i.143.5, iii.14.1, iv.18.5, vi.23.3, vi.75.1 and vi.86.5. Six of the eight are made either by or about Athens; the two others are references to Mytilene at iii.14.1. and Syracuse at vi.75.1.

12. For a discussion of Thucydides' judgement of Cleon for rejecting Spartan peace proposals after the Athenian success at Pylos see S. Hornblower, *Greek World*, 133 and 137.

13. T. S. Brown, *The Greek Historians*, (Lexington, 1973), 61, calls this a malicious comment by Thucydides, although he does not appear to distort the facts. Hornblower, *Greek World*, 137, draws attention to the similarity of vocabulary between Thucydides' account of the peace proposals after Pylos and the policy over Sicily, e.g. the use of πλεονεξία to describe both.

14. The phrase used in the Melians' speech, τοῖς ἄλλοις παράδειγμα is, perhaps, an ironic echo of that used by Pericles [ii.37.1], παράδειγμα δὲ μᾶλλον αὐτοὶ ὄντες τισὶν and may recall how much the Athenians have changed since that speech.

15. Hornblower, *Greek World*, 140.

16. Hermocrates [iv.59.4, and iv.61.1] refers to Sicilian disunity. At vii.48.2. Nicias has information on a pro-Athenian party in Syracuse.

17. A. W. Gomme, A. Andrewes, K. J. Dover, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides*, (Oxford, 1981), 5.353.

NOTES: CHAPTER FOUR

1. Liddell - Scott - Jones, *Greek - English Lexicon*, (Oxford, 1968) *s.v.h.*

   Ἀσφάλεια is used three times by Herodotus in the form ἀσφάλειη [4.33, 2.121, 3.7]. It occurs six times in the adverbial form, ἀσφαλέως, [4.134, 2.161, 5.35, 1.86, 2.169, 6.86], and eleven times as an adjective [3.4, 146, 4.97, 5.52, 5.92, 3.31, 1.120, 7.128, 3.67, 75, 1.109]. It most often refers to personal and physical safety but at 1.86 is used of the instability of human affairs, and at 6.86 is found in a context that suggests a reversal of fortune.

2. These examples occur at i.6.1, 17.1, 107.3,4, 137.2,4,

   ii.27.1, 43.1, 75.5

   iii.22.3,8, 105.4

   iv.57.4, 68.5, 71.2, 92, 107.1, 126.6, 128.3.

   v.7.3.

   vi.55.3, 56.3, 59.2, 70.3, 101.6.

   vii.24.3, 36, 38.3, 77.5.

   viii.1.3, 2.4, 4.1, 39.4, 41.1, 46, 66.5, 88.1, 89.1.

3. A. W. Gomme, *HCT*, 1. 177.

4. Hornblower, *Greek World*, 35.

5. Gomme, *HCT*, 1. 272 - 280.

6. It is possible that the Egyptian expedition of 459? - 454 may have been undertaken during a period when Pericles was influential in Athenian policy - making. If this is so, then his control of affairs can hardly have been 'without failure'.

7. Ἐλπίς is used almost uniformly throughout the *History* to describe unfulfilled expectation, according to P. Huart, *Le vocabulaire d'analyse psychologique dans l'oeuvre de Thucydide*, 145, and quoted in H. R. Rawlings, *The Structure of Thucydides' History* (Princeton, 1981), 236.

NOTES: CHAPTER FIVE

1. Δίκη is a kind of balance in the order of things which must be maintained. Ὕβρις (16 times) and ὑβρίζω (3 times) are found in Herodotus. They are used of arrogant, defiant and frequently violent behaviour that is punished. They are also found in warning contexts, e.g. wealth and power result in ὕβρις and lead to recklessness [3.80]. Artabanus also warns Xerxes that ὕβρις brings disaster [7.16]. Herodotus quotes an oracle about the Persian invasion of Greece in which the role of δικη is described [8.77]

   - Δίκη σβέσσει κρατερὸν Κόρον, Ὕβριος υἱόν.

2. The idea of the Funeral Speech itself representing a kind of hubris is developed by A. J. Woodman, *Rhetoric in Classical Historiography*, (Oregon, 1988), 32 - 40.

3. W. R. Connor, *Thucydides*, 150, notes that the Melian dialogue leads straight into the account of Sicily without Thucydides' usual practice of a rounding-off sentence, thus implying some kind of link between the two.

4. The unfinished state of book viii makes it impossible to say how Thucydides would have completed it. H. R. Rawlings, *The Structure of Thucydides' History*, 176-207, suggests that Thucydides has paired the books and that viii is thus linked with iii, since they both deal with rebellion in the empire. As it is, the lack of speeches and the downplaying of the Athenian defeat in Sicily to which Thucydides earlier devoted two complete books, show some

significant differences in his approach to and treatment of the war.

5. For a discussion of Cleon's ὀργή and violence, as opposed to the need for rational thought, γνώμη, see M.C. Mittelstadt, "Thucydidean psychology and moral value judgement in the *History*: some observations", *Rivista di Studi Classici* 25 (1977) pp.52-4.

6. v. Chapter Three, n.8.

7. One of Thucydides' reasons for writing history was his belief that past events may be repeated in the future while human nature remains the same and reacts in the same way to similar events [i.122].

8. Connor, *Thucydides*, 116 - 118, suggests that in his description of the Pylos incident, Thucydides is making a dramatic reconstruction of developments as they were reported to the Athenians. In addition, Thucydides does not give a full account of the affair.

9. S. Hornblower, *Greek World*, 137, suggests that the Spartan peace offer was, in actual historical fact, an empty promise that Athens was right to reject.

10. The ancient critic, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, accused Thucydides of slandering Athens in his presentation of the Melian dialogue, quoted by F.M.Cornford, *Thucydides Mythistoricus*, 180-1. P. Huart, *Le vocabulaire d'analyse psychologique dans l'oeuvre de Thucydide*, 484, concludes that Thucydides' intention was to show

the Athenians' action to be logical and rational, as they claimed they were. Both points of view seem valid, since Thucydides shows through the Athenians' arguments that he is aware of the reality of power and its effects on the Athenians themselves. The juxtaposition of this dialogue and the account of the Sicilian expedition show, too, that he is aware of the irony in the situation in Sicily. Connor, *Thucydides*, 147-57, notes the reversal of roles for the Athenians: they become like the Melians in Sicily.

11. Hornblower, *Greek World*, 142.

12. Perhaps Thucydides is trying to show, as Connor suggested about Pylos, that this incident was uppermost in people's minds at the time. His description of it [vi.27-9] suggests that he is attempting to recapture the drama of the moment: the Hermae are mutilated and no one knows who is responsible: it is a bad omen for the expedition and a decree is passed giving immunity to anyone who gives information about the incident: the information is gradually pieced together and Alcibiades' name introduced: Alcibiades denies the charges and offers to stand trial but the case against him is not good enough and he is allowed to sail with the possibility of a later charge hanging over him.

13. Rawlings, *The Structure of Thucydides' History*, 111, sees a link between the tyrannicides and Athens in the over-reaction and violent response of Hippias to Hipparchus' murder, which is similar to the response of the demos against Alcibiades and the aristocrats. Both led to disastrous consequences for the state.

14. A. W. Gomme, A. Andrewes, K. J. Dover, *HCT* 5.98, explain that the pay referred to was probably only part of the sum paid to Athenian sailors. The rest would have been given on completion of a voyage.

15. F.M.Cornford, *Thucydides Mythistoricus*, 153- 73, goes further and sees Athens as a tragic heroine with parallels to Aeschylean tragedy in her ὕβρις and madness.

NOTES: CONCLUSIONS

1. C. Macleod, *Collected Essays*, 141, lists some of the noticeable differences in treatment between book viii and the previous books.

2. For an analysis of the structure of the *History* as comprising two wars that reveal similarities of treatment by Thucydides, so that book viii echoes book iii, see H. R. Rawlings, *The Structure of Thucydides' History*.

3. Macleod, *Collected Essays*, 141.

4. V. Hunter, *Past and Process in Herodotus and Thucydides*, 119-176.

5. There are some striking parallels between the first seven books of the *History* and Aeschylus' *Persae* in vocabulary and thought. In the *Persae*, first produced in 472, Aeschylus uses as his theme a contemporary historical event, the Great War with Persia. He builds up a picture of Persian might through the repetition of words that suggest power and greatness and implies the idea of disaster through the forebodings of the characters in the play, e.g. the Chorus (1-154) and Queen Atossa (155-248). In this way he implies that failure is near. Thucydides, too, describes Athenian greatness through emphasis and repetition in the Funeral speech of Pericles and suggests its end through juxtaposition with his account of the plague, and through repetition of such words as λαμπρότης. In Aeschylus' play the ghost of Darius, who represents the older, wiser generation, warns of the impending disaster caused by Persian ὕβρις, i.e. that of

the young king, Xerxes [782-6]. Similarly in the *History* Pericles' policy, called ἀσφαλῶς by Thucydides, is abandoned by his successors [ii.65]. This appears to be Thucydides' implication through the repetition of σφάλλειν/εσθαι. Persia fails through her ὕβρις which is exactly the accusation made against Athens by her opponents, by Pericles and by Thucydides. Finally, there is a striking similarity in the vocabulary used by Thucydides in his summary of the Sicilian disaster [vii.87] and that of the Chorus describing the Persian defeat at Salamis (558-563). Each is referred to as a πανωλεθρία in which ships, νῆες, and cavalry, πεζὸς, are destroyed, ἀπόλλυμι. Even the line that few out of many returned from Sicily [vii.87.6] occurs in Darius' description of the return of the remnants of the Persian force across the Hellespont [800].

6. Gomme, *HCT*, 2, 195-6.

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